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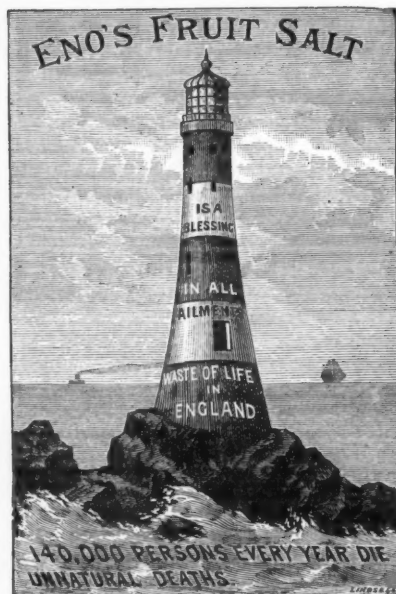
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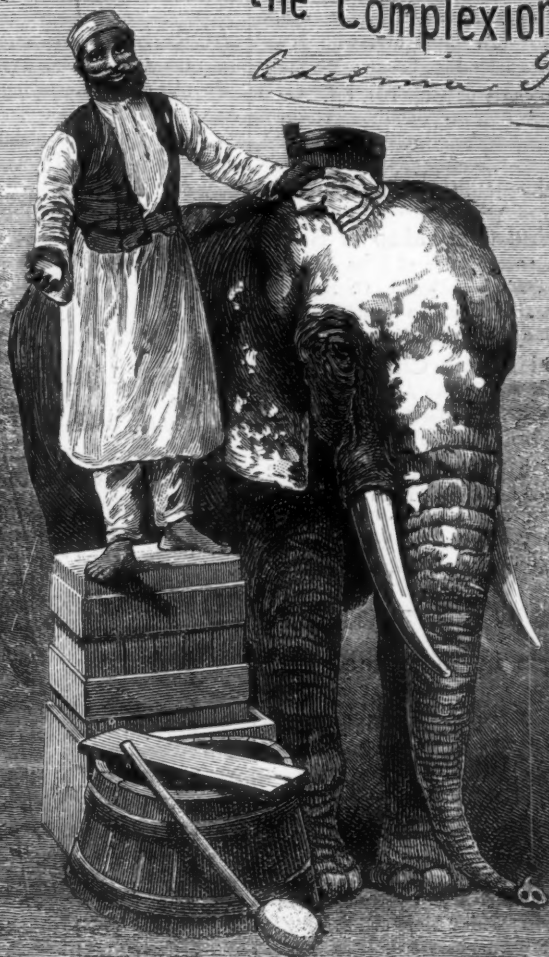
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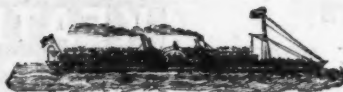
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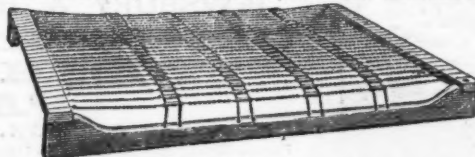
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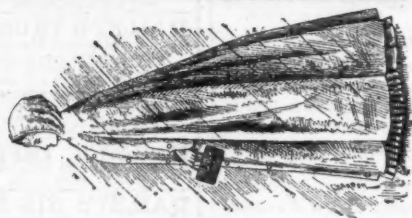
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AUGUST 1884.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

AUGUST 1884.

Jack's Courtship :

A SAILOR'S YARN OF LOVE AND SHIPWRECK.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

CHAPTER XXIX.

I SAVE A CHILD'S LIFE.

IT is not always blowing at sea, whatever ladies may think, though to be sure I have known a ship leave Adelaide and carry a storm with her from abreast of Cape Horn to Ushant, when, after a hundred and forty days of grinding and tossing, there fell a calm with light baffling breezes from the eastward which kept her groping about the Chops until passengers and crew made up their minds that the tormented hooker they were aboard of was just the *Flying Dutchman* that was doomed never to reach her destination. Nevertheless, it is not always blowing at sea, a mercy sailors are grateful for; and with us it happened that the gale, which had swept us south a distance of eight hundred miles in seventy-two hours, expired when the last of those hours had come round, and left us rolling in a dead calm on the verge of the Horse latitudes. We were in warmer weather now, and the sun climbed up over the calm, very hot indeed, with a sea like heaving quicksilver shot with scores of colours, as a daguerreotype plate is when you slant it about to the light. I remember that particular forenoon well, though we had many others like it. The awning was spread over the poop, and the blue sky between it and the rail made a frame whose tender azure was here and there piebald with lumps of white cloud, one peering over another like a lot of old giants forking their bald heads up over the sea-line. The

ship had spread every stitch of plain sail belonging to her to catch the flutterings of air that crept along the water, blurring the polished folds with streaks that had a look of ice in the distance; and she was managing to sneak along fast enough to leave a few holes in the sea under her counter, and to keep her course steady at the lubber's point, allowing for the swing of the swell. Everybody, save the watch below, was on deck; and it was enough to make a man thoughtful to stand at the break of the poop, and turn his eyes forward and then aft and observe what a mob of people were being kept alive by nothing more than a few timbers. The steerage and 'tween-deck passengers filled the quarter and main decks and forecastle; they walked about in pairs or conversed in groups, or sat sunning themselves in the ardent beams to the enjoyment of which they would bring a particular relish after their long confinement in the gloom and noise and bewildering motion below; the children played in the scuppers, thoughtful faces looked into the wonderful ocean distance as if seeking to create upon the remote and polished line some image of the Pacific shores whither they were bound in search of bread if not of fortune, whilst sailors were at work aloft on jobs it would be idle to describe, and a spun-yarn winch was rattling on the forecastle, and the sailmaker and his mates flourished their shining needles and tarry twine over some stretch of fore and aft canvas.

The cuddy passengers were scattered over the poop, Captain Jackson and his wife in American arm-chairs with books in their hands, Thompson Tucker on his back on a hen-coop, a cigar in his mouth, and his head in a coil of rope, Mrs. Grant and her daughter knitting or doing some work of that kind, and the Joyce children—pretty little infants with long fair curls down their backs and blue eyes, all as like one another as peas are or eggs—playing bopeep round the compass stand before the foremost skylight. Aunt Damaris and Florence were on chairs near the mizzenmast, the former looking at the sea with her mittened hands locked upon her lap, and my darling reading some book from which every now and again she would lift her eyes and steal a peep at me, who walked quietly to and fro past her with the chief officer, Mr. Thornton. Presently Captain Jackson yawned loudly, got out of his chair, and joined us.

'What's the weather going to be like, can you guess, Mr. Thornton?' said he. 'Is there any sign to be found in this westerly swell?'

'I don't think it means anything, sir,' replied the chief mate.

'It was just hereabouts,' said the navy man, in his loud voice, and taking all hands within reach of his notes into his confidence, as his way was, 'that a thunderstorm demagnetised the compass of his Britannic Majesty's ship *Wren*, in which I was then a midshipman. It came on as black as my hat, though the daylight was abroad, being four o'clock of the afternoon, and there whizzed

out of the mud overhead such a flash of lightning as never saw I the like of since. It put the whole sea on fire, sir; it was as if all creation had been plunged into the infernal regions. Well, when the thunder was gone, and it must have taken a long five minutes for the echo of that crashing boom to roll away out of hearing over the slippery smoothness—not a breath, mind you—we saw the binnacle card spinning round like a teetotum. Its sensibility was killed, sir. It was never afterwards worth a dump. Fortunately, we had a spare compass on board, or we should have had to steer by the stars, of which, by the way, we never obtained a glimpse, for it came on thick that night and remained so a whole fortnight.’ And our friend looked triumphantly around him as he usually did when he spun a marine yarn, just as though no experience that ever befell him was to be matched by what anybody else had seen or suffered. It was never my policy at that time to appear to have any knowledge of the nautical calling, otherwise I should have liked to tell Captain Jackson that the effect of his thunderstorm was not so extraordinarily uncommon as he supposed, I myself having been in a ship during a magnetic outburst which reversed the poles of the compass, so that when the officer of the watch went to see how the vessel was heading he could not believe his eyes; the compass pointed north by east, and our course was south by west. There was a regular outcry; the man at the wheel was abused, and he swore he had never shifted the helm; the sailors thought the ship bewitched, for did any one hear of a ship suddenly slewing around sixteen points without anybody taking notice of the change, the vessel having steered way at the time? The cause was discovered after a bit, but the general consternation was very fine whilst it lasted.

‘Strange things happen at sea,’ said Mr. Thornton; ‘I was once in a ship that sprung a leak, and how do you think it was caused? Why, by the sounding-rod, sir. We had tried the pump—well so often that, hang me, Captain Jackson, if at last the rod had not passed slick through the ship’s bottom.’

‘That’s nothing,’ said Captain Jackson. ‘If you’re fond of wonders, listen to this. I was in a ten-gun brig, and left Hong Kong for Foochoo. Off the Bashee Islands we had to heave-to in a gale of wind, and in the middle of the storm we struck something with such force that all hands thought we were ashore and must go to pieces. We sounded without finding bottom, and the land was invisible. What could it be? Well, sir, the brig began to make water, and gangs were sent to the pumps. We managed to reach Foochoo, and when the vessel was surveyed, what do you think was discovered? Why, sir, that a sword-fish had pierced the solid oak and sheathing with its sword, that was three inches in diameter, and had broken short off, leaving a space of an inch wide on either side through which the water flowed.’ And with that he cast another triumphant look round.

A little of such nautical talk went a long way with me when Florence was in sight; and our walk to and fro regularly bringing me abreast of her and her aunt, I dropped Captain Jackson and Mr. Thornton, to address myself to the ladies.

'Well, Miss Hawke,' said I to the aunt, 'here is fine weather at last, almost perhaps more than we want. Don't you prefer the last three days' gale to this?' and I seated myself on the edge of the skylight close beside her. Florence closed her book and looked up at me with a smile.

'I like wind to blow us along,' replied Miss Damaris, 'but not great waves which throw one off one's balance and make existence quite horrible. Pray, Mr. Egerton,' sinking her voice, 'what was the chief mate talking to you about just now, before Captain Jackson joined you?'

'About his profession, madam—about ships.'

'Oh, I thought as you passed that I overheard one of you mention the name of the person who, as I told you, so far as I am concerned, has no further existence.'

'You mean Mr. Morecombe. I solemnly assure you that his name was never mentioned;' and struggling to think for a moment what could have made her imagine that the chief mate and I had been talking about that man, the recollection of a phrase Thornton had used flashed upon me, and I burst into a laugh. 'I'll tell you what you heard,' I exclaimed; 'the chief officer was contrasting this ship with another he had sailed in, and said that her floor had *more camber* than this—meaning, as he explained, that it was higher in the middle than at the stem and stern; that's the phrase you must have caught and mistaken.'

She peered into my face as if she would read me through, and said, with a deal of acidity in her voice, 'Well, you see I have ears. I don't mind—indeed I can't help others talking, but you have given me your word—'

'And I am keeping it,' I exclaimed, flushing up a bit, for I did not at all relish her utterly unfounded suspicion.

'Aunt, you are unnecessarily sensitive; I am surprised that you should question Mr. Egerton's plain assurance,' said Florence, bringing out Egerton with a little struggle, but speaking with warmth for all that.

'Florence, how dare you! I am not questioning Mr. Egerton's plain assurance. I believe what he says. Mr. Egerton,' turning to me and giving me a very gracious bow of her head, 'I fully believe you, sir, and I beg your pardon if—'

'Oh, pray, Miss Hawke,' I began.

'Unnecessarily sensitive, Florence!' she whipped out, interrupting me, and rounding again upon her niece; 'how is it possible that you can consider me so? Didn't I tell you that that horrid young man had told Mr. Egerton some odious stories about us when he was intoxicated—I don't mean you, Mr. Egerton

—dear me! I am quite flustered. And do you think I am unnecessarily sensitive because I desire that his wicked exaggerations should not be known to the passengers; least of all,' said she, lowering yet the rather hoarse whisper in which she was speaking, and eyeing Captain Jackson grimly as he passed by with Thornton, 'that dreadful naval person there, who roars like a bull when he talks? Do *you* think me unnecessarily sensitive, Mr. Egerton?'

'I do not, madam,' I replied, with great emphasis and just one peep at my darling's eyes which were upon me; 'and I sincerely trust you will never deem me capable of betraying the trust you have honoured me with.'

'No, indeed I have the highest confidence in your honour as a gentleman,' said she, unbending her manner into the suggestion of a complete apology. 'I hope you will forgive me.'

'Oh, madam,' said I, 'you embarrass me—forgive a lady!' And I flourished my hand and bowed, and she bowed, and Florence, who could not conceal her merriment, dropped her book as an excuse to hide her face. I saw Mr. Thompson Tucker staring at us out of his coil of rope. No doubt he wondered what was making this old lady and me so deucedly polite to each other.

'You talked, Mr. Egerton,' said Aunt Damaris, soothingly and very graciously, 'of returning in this ship. I presume, therefore, you will stay about three months in Sydney?'

'About that time, I believe,' I replied, beginning to breathe short, for even when she and I were alone this sort of questions always bothered me terribly; but they were scarcely endurable when Florence was near, for I did not dare venture upon a fib in my sweetheart's presence.

'It will give me much pleasure to see you at my house when you are in Sydney,' said the old lady.

'You are extremely good,' I answered. 'Nothing will give me more happiness.'

'That's a very long invitation, aunt,' said Florence, laughing.

'Mr. Egerton has been exceedingly polite to me,' responded Aunt Damaris, 'and if there should be anything *colonial* in what you call the length of this invitation, my dear, I hope he will pardon my Australian manners.'

There was something in the way in which she said this that caused my darling to give me one of those intensely meaning glances which sweethearts, whether they have beautiful eyes or not, have a knack of casting at one another. I had not up to that moment addressed her, nor could Aunt Damaris have guessed the true state of our hearts from any single sign between us when she was present on previous occasions; but it happened when Florence lifted her eyes to my face in the manner I have mentioned that her aunt was looking at her full; and the effect of

it upon her was shown by the speed with which she whipped round her sharp old face to stare at me. I gazed mildly into her greenish eyes until she removed them to Florence again. Well, thought I, she'll be stumbling on the truth sooner or later, and then she'll be finding out who I am, and *then*—and I was musing in this fashion, whilst in the pause that fell upon us I watched the operation of Florence's intercepted look in the old maid's mind, noticed it stiffening her as the ideas it bred increased in number until her face took the hardness of a ship's figure-head, the thin under lip tightening into a mere line, and her sharp nose standing out with a heaving nostril past the lank sausage curl that embellished her starboard cheek, when I heard a sudden small plash over the port side, followed by a woman's long ear-piercing shriek that penetrated from one end of the ship to the other and came down in a sharp clear echo out of the sails.

I was too old a hand not to know what the soft peculiar sound of that plash signified, even though no yell should have followed to make a horror of the thing; I sprang in three bounds on to the hencoop abaft the mizzen rigging, and looking over saw a child floating with its hands raised upon the glass-blue surface within a couple of feet of the ship's side. The vessel, as I have said, had steerage way upon her, and was moving through the water at the rate of about a mile and a half or so an hour. I threw down my hat, and singing out to Thompson, 'Pitch me a life-buoy,' I jumped into the mizzen chains and dropped into the sea. I was a fairly good swimmer, though from want of practice no hand at a long bout. Slowly as the ship was sailing and rapid as my movements had been, I was surprised when I came to the surface to observe the distance the two little lifted arms—for that was all I could see—had already dropped astern. I knew that children drown quickly, and I struck out with all my strength, taking the exact bearings of the child's hands by a group of heavy white clouds on the horizon; and fortunate it was that I had presence of mind enough to do that same, for a minute before I reached the spot the child's arms had disappeared, but I could see the little body just below the surface quivering in the refraction of the wonderful translucent azure of the water, and with a bit of a dive and a quick grasp I had the bairn's head out of it, and looked about me for the life-buoy.

There was the circular white thing within a few kicks of my feet, hove as I might guess by a sailor, and in a few moments I had it under my armpits, and the child atop—not dead, heaven be praised! but nearly choked with the salt water in it. It was Mrs. Joyce's little girl—one of the three that had been playing about the poop at hide-and-seek. I held her on high, she was but a feather in my hands, with a slant of the head to let the water drain from her throat, and I could hear cheers and cries rolling in a sort of broadside from the ship's bul-

warks, which were black with the swarming of sailors and passengers, whilst aft stood a crowd motioning and shrieking. I tell you it was strange to hear those sounds coming along the smooth surface—every note clear as a bell, though a confusion of hurrahs and hysterical screaming, and the loud orders of the mate directing the hands, who were frantically at work in clearing away the quarter boat ready for lowering, mixed with the flapping of the canvas beating the masts as the vessel lifted with the swell and the straining of spars and the chafe of the running gear.

The ship came round very slowly to the faint draught that was stirring aloft, and if this had been my first experience overboard I should have found something like a new sensation in the sight of the stretch of water betwixt me and the gleaming hull leaning her shapely checkered side out of the yearning gurgle of the swell until you could see the water sparkling as it drained down the bends past the greenish metal into the sea. But a man who has tumbled off a yard-arm into a smother of yeast and a hollow full of roaring can't be expected to make much of an adventure overboard in a calm, with a life-buoy around him and plenty of sunlight for him to be seen by.

The boat came down into the water with a rattle and a splash, the oars broke into a silver shining as they were raised after the first dip, and in a trice the little girl and I were lifted into her and rowed alongside the ship. The child was handed up to twenty pairs of arms extended to receive her, and I, dripping wet and feeling more like a water-rat than a man, scrambled into the mainchains and so got aboard. From the mainmast to the cuddy-front the deck was just a block of people, and there being plenty of mothers among them, they would have made some kind of fuss over this very cheap, mild exploit had I not hurriedly shoved through them on my way to my cabin, saying in reply to their 'Well done, sir!' 'A mother's blessing on you, young man!' 'There's the right kind of stuff in you, sir,' and the like of such exclamations, 'Oh, it's all right. It's no more than a ducking for either of us.'

And yet, small as the incident was, it was of the right kind to cause a sensation: it was a break in the monotony of the sea-life; then again, no kind of excitement caused by accident upon the ocean surpasses the thrill sent through the heart by the fall of a person overboard, and all the women, and maybe all the fathers in that ship, would find a child tumbling into the water much more moving than had a man taken an involuntary header; and so combining these points with the electrical effect of the piercing shriek that followed the accident, the rush to the side, the shouts and screams of men and women, I could not be surprised to find the crowd of 'tween-deck and other passengers very much stirred and somewhat enthusiastically demonstrative as I passed through them.

I stripped and dried myself, and was soon completely dressed, and lighting a cigar stepped through the cuddy, up the companion ladder, to the poop. The moment I showed my nose Daniel pounced upon me: 'Jack,' cried he, 'it was smartly done. The child owes its life to you. The least delay would have been fatal, for the child was under when you reached her.' And as he said this up bustled the passengers, Mrs. O'Brien, full of Irish impulse, using her elbows that she might force her way to shake hands with me, Mrs. Jackson jostling Mrs. Grant, Captain Jackson jamming Thompson Tucker against Aunt Damaris, Mrs. Marmaduke Mortimer sobbing as an emotional young wife knows how on such occasions, and her husband hovering on the skirts of the others, waiting to catch my eye. It was what an actor would call an ovation, whatever *that* may mean, if it don't refer to pelting a fellow-creature with rotten eggs, and I was so exceedingly disconcerted that I was heartily sorry I hadn't turned in when I stripped myself instead of coming on deck.

'Mr. Egerton,' cried Mrs. O'Brien, 'ye're a hero; there's the makings of a thrue mother in you, and my blessin' upon you as a widow who has been a mother herself.'

'It was a very smart thing, Mr. Egerton, let me tell you, sir,' shouted Captain Jackson. 'Had you been a sailor, you couldn't have shown more presence of mind.'

'Mr. Egerton,' cried Aunt Damaris, 'I must shake your hand. Your conduct is truly impressive.'

I am sure I cannot remember what I mumbled in reply to these and a dozen other courtesies and compliments. The smallness of the exploit made me feel that there is a deal of unconscious irony in the most generous of human impulses, and I was sensible of blushing like a girl as I bowed and wagged my head and begged them to say no more. But I was not to be let off yet; for on a sudden I heard a voice crying out, 'Where is he? where is he?' and up rushed Mr. Joyce, the others making way for him, and seizing my hands he endeavoured to speak, but his voice failed him, and he looked at me only with the eyes of a man whose heart is full of tears.

'How is she?' I asked.

'Oh!' he answered in broken tones, 'she will take no harm the doctor thinks. Nothing is to be feared but the shock to the nervous system. She is talking to her mother—' and breaking down, he called God's blessing on my head in barely articulate words.

His gratitude was so affecting that for the life of me I couldn't help a mist creeping over my eyes. To God bless a man is but a conventional phrase: but when a father says the solemn words, when the blessing of the Almighty is asked for you by a man whose child's life you have saved, and who speaks with sobs in his voice and his face made infinitely affecting by

gratitude, the sentence takes a wonderful significance, you feel there is more in it than sound, and the memory it gives is something to linger like a shining light in the mind for many a long year.

He explained how the accident had befallen. The forward end of the hencoops which ran down either side the poop stopped short within half a dozen feet or so of the termination of the raised deck, leaving the rail open: the child had gone behind the square end of the coop to hide from her little brothers, and the nurse catching sight of the wee body at the instant it toppled backwards and overboard, sent up the wonderful shriek I have mentioned. I should have imagined that nobody but the mother could have delivered such a note, but be that as it may, when Mr. Joyce had explained how the thing had happened he again grasped my hands as if he would embrace me, and then hurried below to see after the little girl.

After a bit the other passengers drew off. Of all those who lived aft the only one who had not approached me was Florence. She had kept her seat, though I knew that her eyes were upon me all the while I stood surrounded by the others. Aunt Damaris had rejoined her, and seeing this I stepped up and seated myself on the edge of the skylight, just where I was before I went overboard, and addressing the old lady I said, 'You were good enough, Miss Hawke, before our conversation was interrupted, to give me leave to call upon you at Sydney—'

'Oh, how can you talk so coolly?' exclaimed Florence. 'Do not you know that you have just saved a little child's life? It was nobly done.' And she put out her hand. I took it and pressed it, lifting my cap as I did so.

'Don't speak of such a thing as that as *noble*,' said I. 'There was no risk. The sea is calm—the ship is scarcely moving. I had a life-buoy to support me. I should be a poor creature if I should take credit for such a twopenny job as that.'

'You are a very enigmatical person, Mr. Egerton,' said the old lady, eyeing me as if I had grown three or four feet since my bath. 'You seem to treat the saving of life very lightly, sir. I think your conduct wonderful. How you can come back here and resume the conversation after an incident that made my very brain reel I cannot imagine.'

'Why, Miss Hawke, I so value your kind invitation that I did not want this little upset to turn it wholly out of your mind, which might have happened if I did not take care to recall it.'

'This little upset! How can you give the very near drowning of an infant such a term?' she exclaimed. 'But perhaps you are used to danger, sir,' eyeing me attentively, and then she said, doubtfully, 'and yet you are too young to have seen enough to harden your nerves. I need not ask if you are in the army?'

'No,' said I, feeling confused, 'you need not ask that, Miss Hawke.'

'Indeed,' she went on, scanning me, 'you have much more the look of a sailor than of any other profession I can imagine. The way in which you sprang from your seat there as if you knew exactly what had happened and where the child had fallen was quite nautical.' And she fixed on me a keen scrutinising gaze that was barely saved from grimness by the reverence my behaviour had excited in her mind.

'Well, you are not a sailor, are you?' said Florence, smiling and coming to my relief, the need of which she would perceive in the flush in my cheeks and my bothered air.

'No, I am not,' I replied, which was true enough, for a man is a sailor only so long as he is in the calling.

'If you were you would not disown it,' she continued, with a light coming into her eyes and a proud eager look into her face, as if she wished me to see her heart and the thoughts of me in it. 'It is a grand calling, and no higher compliment could be paid you after what I *will* call your noble act, than to say you deserve to be a sailor.'

Aunt Damaris twisted her lean face from her to me and from me to her with the old pecking of the nose that was like groping for information. At this moment Mrs. Joyce came up the companion hatch, and immediately catching sight of me ran up with her arms outstretched, and literally locked her hands round the back of my neck.

'Oh, Mr. Egerton,' she cried, sobbing and crying and looking wildly into my eyes with her face close to mine, 'how am I to thank you for saving my darling's life? What am I to say to you?' And, almost incoherent in her language, as people violently affected often are, she called me noble and generous and brave, blessed me again and again, let go my neck to grasp my hand and kiss it, and then turned to Aunt Damaris and my darling—maybe because they happened to be near—and asked them to tell her if I was not the most courageous—— But avast! there is too much of self-praise in all this to make its repetition agreeable to me, though having a yarn to relate I must tell you what happened in it.

Moving as the father's thanks were, the mother's went much deeper into my heart. I heard a sound of sobbing behind me, and afterwards learned that it proceeded from Mrs. Marmaduke Mortimer, whilst the tears stood in Florence's eyes and Aunt Damaris hung her head.

'He thinks nothing of the action,' said the old lady, when Mrs. Joyce had ceased. 'We were conversing before he jumped into the water, and no sooner has he changed his clothes than he comes back and goes on talking as if saving a child's life were no more than catching a fly.'

'Nevertheless, Mrs. Joyce,' said I, 'I thank God for the privilege of preserving you from a great grief. Tell me now how the little darling does.'

'Oh, very very much better than we had dared hope,' she answered. 'I do not think there is anything to fear from the shock to the system, as she is almost too young to suffer in that way. She has asked to see you and give you a kiss? Will you come down to her?'

'Assuredly,' I replied, and I followed her to the cabin occupied by the nurse and the three bairns. The father and Mr. Griffith were there—the other children and the nurse being in the parents' cabin—and the child lay in the top bunk under the scuttle, snug in the sheets and her fair hair covering the pillow. Mates, did any of you ever save the life of a fellow-being? If so you'll know what sort of feeling comes into one when one stands and looks at the living face and the grateful eyes, and hears the low notes of thanks, half-checked by overwhelming emotion, which but for one's action, be it great or little, would be white and dead and still. The name of this little girl was Lily—and a flower of that kind she looked, a bud rather, with the sunshine of her hair upon her.

'My darling,' said I, bending over her, 'I know the doctor does not want you to speak. I have come to give you a kiss and to tell you that to-morrow you will be able to get up—at least I hope so—and run about the deck again: only you and your brothers must mind never to go near the edge of the ship, for it is not good for little boys and girls to tumble into the sea.'

And so saying I kissed her tiny mouth and passed my hand over her hair and drew away. The father and mother were crying—and to speak the truth, my lads, so was I: at least there were tears in my eyes. But I whisked them off, and after exchanging a few words with the doctor and receiving another outpouring of fervent thanks from Mr. and Mrs. Joyce, I withdrew to my own cabin to stretch my back in my bunk until lunch-time, thinking that I had best not put myself too much in Florence's company when Aunt Damaris was alongside until my pet and I had settled upon some definite line of policy.

CHAPTER XXX.

FLORENCE CONFESSES.

IT does not take much to make a hero of a man (for a few hours) on board a ship, where there's nothing to talk about except the rate of speed, and what's for dinner to day; and so at lunch I found myself a conspicuous figure, the ladies smiling at me, the gentlemen begging the honour of taking wine with me (the

custom was not yet dead) whilst the stewards favoured me with their best attention. Florence as usual sat betwixt me and the captain, Aunt Damaris having up to this time made no objection; but the meal was very nearly over before I could manage to tackle her in one of our quiet, half-whispered talks, for now that the doctor had said that the child was doing very well (Mr. and Mrs. Joyce being absent from the table) the passengers felt at liberty to talk freely about the accident and to ask me questions, such as how I had managed not to hurt myself by jumping into the water (this was Mrs. O'Brien's), and how I managed to keep myself afloat in my clothes, whilst Captain Jackson exclaimed that if he hadn't known me to be a landsman by the questions I had asked the pilot, he should have supposed I was a sailor: 'by one circumstance I took notice of, sir, and that was your having taken the bearings of the infant; for she had vanished before you reached the spot, and if you hadn't fixed her locality by some object—a cloud I take it, sir, for there was nothing else—why, then all I can say is, little Missy Joyce would have been at the bottom of the ocean by this time.'

The ladies shuddered, and Daniel pointed to the Joyces' cabin with a grimace at the navy man. But the subject was too fascinating to be dropped. Mrs. O'Brien remembered the narrow escape of her little brother from drowning in the Liffey; Mr. Thompson Tucker knew a man who was a cousin of a fellow who had saved a bargee's life by heaving an open umbrella to him; and Captain Jackson had some remarkable stories to relate of Navigating Lieutenant Jones who jumped overboard in a heavy gale of wind and saved a marine who had tumbled over the side in a drunken fit, and of Master's Assistant Smith who had drowned a purser's mate in a squall by heroically jumping right on top of him when he was in the water, in the manly effort to save his life: to all which of course I was bound in courtesy to listen.

However, when at last the conversation slackened, Florence said to me, 'You don't seem to care what I think of your conduct, Jack.'

'You may be sure of that, my darling,' said I with fine irony; 'you know that your opinion is of no consequence to me at all.'

'Well,' she continued, smiling, 'whether you care about my opinion or not, I will tell you this, you ought to be proud of what you have done. It is a glorious thing to save a life.'

'So it is, Florence, but we'll say no more about it, my pet. The child is rescued, is well, and there's an end. I have something more serious to talk to you about. Only, confound it, with your aunt making a fender of the skipper's elbow t'other side there, talking seriously is almost impossible. If Mrs. O'Brien looks, Miss Damaris will look, and if *she* looks she'll see.'

'First, what is a fender, Jack?' asked Florence, giving me my name now very easily, and with a distinct relish in the utterance.

'Why,' said I, 'something that you put over a ship's side to prevent it from being chafed.'

'I am no wiser,' she exclaimed. 'But never mind. What is it that you want to talk to me seriously about?' and she peered at me with one of those coquettish glances which in most girls never fail to set a man's heart galloping.

'How can you ask?' whispered I. 'I have told you I love you—have I not, Florence?'

She pretended to look for something between her and Daniel.

'Answer me, my sweetest girl,' said I, whispering always.

'Yes, you have,' she replied, giving me a view of her left cheek that was full of colour.

'And do you know,' said I, 'that you have never yet told me that you love me?'

'Oh, don't talk to me in that way—here,' she exclaimed, with her eyes on the tablecloth. 'I am sure Captain Thompson hears you, and Mrs. Marmaduke Mortimer is staring so hard.'

I peered at Daniel, but he had his shoulder towards us and was chattering briskly with Aunt Damaris. 'Am I never to be alone with you, Florence?' I whispered. 'It is fearfully hard to pretend not to care about you, and I have to do that when we're not alone. Can't you manage to come on deck this evening for a little walk with me? you gave me to hope you would not allow your aunt to have her own way altogether with you.'

'If it is fine I will see,' said she.

'It will be fine,' said I. 'Come up to breathe the fresh air; say at half-past-eight. I have much to talk to you about.'

She let me know she consented, though without speaking. Soon after this we left the table and I went on deck, where I found the ship sailing with a wind blowing over the taffrail, topmast and topgallant-stunsails aloft, the mainsail hauled up and all the canvas from the royals down swinging in and out as the vessel curtsied on the following swell, beating the masts with a pendulum-like movement and a sharp drumming of reef-points. When you looked over the side it was like gazing into the sky, so rich, limpid, profound was the blue of the water, and there was a kittenish playfulness in the tiny surges which ran along with us for the space of a breath and then dissolved in silver. Northwards, whence the wind was blowing, the ocean was an indigo blue, sloping and rounding against the lighter heaven with the clear configuration of a swelling space of land: but this most beautiful colour grew paler as the sweep of the sea-line took it east and west towards the south, where the little clouds which passed over our mastheads seemed to be waiting as if like a flock of sheep they had found their pen down there; whilst the hot white sun shining a little way on the right of them, put the brilliance of snow upon them for the sea beneath to reflect; so that over either cathead the water ran away from the cutwater in an azure

that fined down into a kind of satinish grey upon the horizon, making such a contrast of the ocean blue deepening as it drew upon our quarters that I have no words to express the beauty of the sight.

Well, most uneventfully the afternoon passed: I lounged, smoked, conversed with first one then another, inquired after little Lily Joyce, took a few turns with the father, and so killed the time. Aunt Damaris and Florence came on deck for a while, but some of the other passengers gathered about them, there was no room for me, and no chance if there had been room to do more than carry on the humbugging masquerade of which, though we were not yet a week out, the obligation was beginning to eat into my soul, and so I stuck to the forward end of the poop, always thinking and plotting and scheming when I was alone, and wondering if ever I should have the luck to win the consent of that darling there to be my wife, and in what fashion our marriage was to be brought about. I happened to be delayed a few minutes after the second dinner-bell rang: and when I entered the cuddy everybody was seated, two of the usual lot only, Mrs. Joyce and her daughter, being absent. Mr. Joyce stood up as I passed him, as if I were the Prince of Wales, and grasped my hand afresh. This would not have confused me alone, but coming as it might be right athwart the discovery that I had already made, namely that Aunt Damaris was in the seat hitherto occupied by Florence whilst *she* was on Daniel's right, I was thrown right into the wind by it, coloured, stammered, asked after the child in a foolish way, and then pushed on, coming to a stand at the port end of the thwartship table.

There was a vacant place next to Florence, and I might have taken it, but besides that this deliberate mooring alongside my darling would have struck all hands as a very significant piece of behaviour, it would have been clearly an act of rudeness to decline what I was bound to regard as Aunt Damaris's offer of her own company. So after just pause enough to recover my confusion, whilst Thompson grinned at me and Florence fixed a Madonna-like gaze on the skylight above her, I took my customary place and fell to the plate of soup the steward put before me. After a brief silence between Aunt Damaris and myself, during which I had been expecting her to give me a reason for changing her seat, I was about to make some commonplace remark to her when she said, in her abrupt, pecking way, 'I hope you are none the worse for your wetting.'

I told her I was not: on the contrary, I thought I was the better for it.

'I believe I was a little short with you this morning,' said she. 'Pray did I express my sense of your heroic conduct in such a manner as to satisfy you? I *admired* your behaviour.'

'Why,' I answered, wondering at this talk, 'you complimented

me very much more handsomely than I deserved, and so you may suppose that I was a great deal more than satisfied.'

'Then that assures me, Mr. Egerton,' said she, 'that the impressions my friends like to make out I produce on others are *not* what they represent. My niece said I had as good as affronted you.'

'Oh, indeed not,' cried I; 'very much the reverse, believe me.'

She screwed her head round to look past Daniel as if she meant to repeat my remark to Florence, but observing her and the skipper deep in conversation she returned to me. 'I don't deny,' she continued, 'that I am a little short-tempered at times. Who is not, pray? And really, Mr. Egerton, you will bear me out when I say that the annoyance I was subjected to at the beginning of this voyage would have ruined the sweetness of an angel. It is a perfect horror to me,' said she, sinking her voice with a sharp look along the table, 'even to *recall* the man in thought: and speak of him I will not. You know what I mean. Had his dreadful exaggerations been circulated, I should have locked myself up in my cabin. Happily they were restricted to you—they came into the keeping of a gentleman—I am therefore safe. But oh, dear me! how can my niece wonder that I should be short-tempered sometimes?'

'It was a terrible trial for a sensitive lady like yourself,' said I, 'and a very narrow escape. And a still narrower escape,' continued I, turning my eyes on the keen bony old profile, 'for your charming relative.'

'Yes, no doubt. We'll say no more about it, sir,' she exclaimed, not relishing this. And then, softening her manner, and speaking with a sort of forced indifference as if she talked merely for the sake of saying something, she asked, 'Are you engaged in any business in England, Mr. Egerton?'

'No,' I replied, 'I am what is called a gentleman at large.'

'Oh, indeed; that is a nice condition of life for a young man with brains, who is temperate and can devote himself to high pursuits such as going into Parliament and things of that kind. Have you any ambition in that way?' says she, with a bit of a smile that gave me the idea that my saying I was a gentleman at large had impressed her.

'I have sometimes thought of it,' I replied, 'but there's no use going into the House, you know, Miss Hawke, unless you can speak. I can *talk*—but I can't speak.'

'Oh! but the social position is worth a good deal,' said she, 'whether you can speak or not. Probably you may have what, I believe, is called in England county interest?'

'Well—no! not exactly,' said I, as if I had something else rather like it, but not that.

'Is not Egerton a good name?' she inquired, still keeping her respectful bit of a smile. 'I don't know. I ask for information. I believe there is a Lord Egerton. Is he any connection of yours?'

'One ought never to say no to a question of that kind,' said I, beginning now to understand why the old woman had shifted her

seat. 'When people are of the same name, it is impossible to say whether they are relatives or not. Hawke, madam, is a very good name. Possibly you will be in some way connected with the famous admiral who beat De Conflans last century?'

'I don't think that can be,' she replied, 'for I cannot remember hearing that we ever had an admiral in our family, though my brother who lives at Clifton has taken the trouble to find out that we can go a long way back, and was talking of having a tree made. Have you a tree?'

'Not in my possession,' I answered. 'But my father had one'—in his garden, I might have gone on to say, but my answer went far enough.

'What is your father, Mr. Egerton?' she inquired carelessly, pretending to be more intent on the piece of fowl on her plate than on me.

'He was a solicitor,' I answered.

'Ah, indeed; the law is a nice calling: so very respectable. There's a deal of money to be made at it too,' says she, munching away at her dinner: and then she asked me if my mother was alive, and if I had any brothers or sisters, and where I lived when in London, and so on. By this time it was quite plain that she had exchanged places with Florence for the purpose of pumping me: and as she was not likely to attempt a job of that kind without some reason, it dawned upon me that she might have discovered that I was very much taken with her niece, or that her niece was very much taken with me, and that she had determined to find out who I was and all about me, with the view of putting herself between me and my darling, or of allowing me to take Mr. Morecombe's place. You will please understand that her questions had not the character of rudeness they may appear to possess as written. She tried—without much success, I admit—to put a sort of maternal manner into her inquiries, as though she would have me to know that she made them not in the least degree out of curiosity, but simply because she had taken a fancy to me, and was interested in me, and wanted for that reason to learn all she could about me. But as I have said, my suspicion being raised, I was very careful to give her truthful answers to her questions, so that the only deception she should be able hereafter to charge me with, would be the sailing under false colours. To be sure I constantly expected to find her turning her green scrutinising eyes upon me, suspecting who I was by my replies; but it was quite evident she had learnt nothing of Jack Seymour from her brother, outside the fact that he was a vulgarish sailor youth; and vulgarish mayhap I did not strike her as being, although she had talked as if she was willing to believe I knew something about the marine life.

Anyway, the mere circumstance of my supposing that she was pumping me in order to discover the extent of my eligibility as a marrying man, caused me to take extraordinary pains with my

behaviour. I slipped several pretty compliments into her with considerable adroitness; and I give you my word, incredible as it may appear, in the tail of our conversation we actually grew sentimental—I don't mean as regards each other, but in our talk. It came about in this way. One of the stewards in passing the Mortimers capsized a small quantity of wine down the young wife's back. The sudden chill made her scream, whereupon Marmaduke fell into agonies of excitement and throes and convulsions of affection. Had the wine been a bucket of scalding water, and his wife half-boiled by it, the disorder of the husband's mind could not have been more extravagant. He mopped her and swabbed her and caressed her, implored her by the name of Letitia to tell him if she was hurt, conjured her to be calm for his sake, and finished in his excitement by sweeping a decanter, a plate, and his knife and fork off the table.

Well, when this business was over, I said to Aunt Damaris, 'What an affecting thing is the love of a newly-married couple!' meaning, you see, to be sarcastic, and never doubting that she would take me in that sense. Greatly to my surprise the grim, acidulated old lady heaved a sigh and said:

'It is affecting, Mr. Egerton. It is a dream—it soon passes—and that makes it affecting. But as a spectacle it moves us—some of us I should say—in another way; as reminding us of that which might have been, but never never came to pass.'

Hallo! thought I, is it possible? Can *she* ever have been in love? And I gazed at the angular old countenance, showing hard and tense past the sausage curl, with a feeling approaching to awe. However, it was not my part to let her sigh for nothing, so I said, 'I suppose, Miss Hawke, it is the doom of all of us to have what I may term blighted passages in our lives. But heaven is very merciful, and teaches us how to forget that we have suffered.'

'You are wrong, Mr. Egerton,' she answered; 'there are some natures that never *can* forget. There are scars which descend to the grave with one, but that is because the wounds were very deep and cruel.'

'You speak feelingly, Miss Hawke,' said I, thinking to myself 'And this is the sentimental old lady who would have foisted that ass Morecombe upon her niece, and made the darling miserable for life.'

'You would think I had reason, were you to know all,' she answered, with a tremble in her voice expressive of emotion that amazed me in her. 'It is too much the fashion to ridicule old maids. I know nothing more objectionable and vulgar. There are such things as marriages in heaven, Mr. Egerton.'

'I have heard of them,' said I sentimentally, 'but never could quite grasp—'

'Well, sir, *I* am married in heaven,' she exclaimed, looking at

me intently. 'A beloved youth died, the grave closed over him; he sleeps in Sydney, and for thirteen years I have never omitted visiting his resting-place once a month. In life we were betrothed, and his death married us. No clergyman could have made us more one, Mr. Egerton, and I know,' continued she, casting her eyes upon the skylight with a look of devotion, 'that when my time comes, the first to—'

Plump at that instant came a small damp swab through the open skylight on which Aunt Damaris's eyes were fixed; it upset a number of things on the table immediately in front of us, and caused commotion enough to make the old lady squeal out.

'Who did that?' roared Daniel in a great rage, hopping out of his seat. 'Mr. Thornton, jump on deck, sir, and find out who threw that swab here. Steward, pick the beastly thing off the table!'

All was bustle and noise. Mr. Thornton rushed out of the cuddy, and while one of the stewards removed the swab, others were baling up the sauce that had been upset, collecting the nuts, almonds and raisins, etc., which had been sent flying, and making the table presentable.

'It was that skylarking apprentice Murphy, sir,' said Mr. Thornton, returning and resuming his seat. 'The second officer had left the poop for a minute, and Murphy and another apprentice fell to chucking that swab at one another, and Murphy's last throw hove it through the skylight.'

Daniel said nothing, but I thought I could detect the threat of a heavy 'work up job' for Murphy in the inflamed profile of my old friend. The apparition of the swab—which the ladies should know is a sort of mop composed of old rope, used for drying the decks—put an end to Aunt Damaris's romantic references to the beloved youth who slept in Sydney. It was holy ground to the old lady, and not proper for me to intrude on unless she invited me to walk in again; and so the matter dropped. I was sorry, for not only was such a subject as that quite in my vein at that time, so that I could have listened to her with flattering sympathy and attention, but it was valuable as a revelation of her queer character. After the swab had been cleared away the conversation grew general, and then the ladies withdrew, leaving us gentlemen to sit alone over the wine, though no smoking was allowed in the cuddy. Daniel had smoothed his countenance, and it shone with his native good-nature. I leaned towards him and said, 'Skipper, I want my sweetheart on deck this evening for a half-hour's patrolling of your poop. If she offers to go on deck after dark, the aunt may think it her duty to follow. This will be objectionable. Will you manage to convey your compliments to Miss Florence after the second dogwatch, and ask her to take a few turns with *you*? Your invitation will make the thing shipshape in the old lady's opinion—always safe with the *dear* captain, you know, Daniel.'

He grinned, and answered, 'Yes, Jack, I'll oblige you; though, hang it! you seem to forget that I told you I should give up making love for you after the introductory business. I say, what did ye think of that swab coming down? How came such a thing as that knocking about the poop? Left in one of the quarter-boats, I suppose. It frightened somebody. Was it *you* that howled?'

I told him it was Aunt Damaris, and nothing having detained me at the table but the desire to get him to promise to ask Florence on deck that evening—thereby doubling my chance of having her to myself for half an hour—I left the cuddy.

I hung about killing the evening as best I could; thinking a good deal of old Aunt Damaris and the queer stuff she had talked to me at dinner, and praying in my heart that she would not think it necessary to join Florence. The dew was heavy and glittered along the henceoops. One by one the people quitted the forecastle, eight bells were struck, the wheel was relieved, the watch on deck turned in, and only a few figures could be seen walking the forward decks. I peered through the skylight and saw Thompson Tucker playing at chess with Marmaduke Mortimer, Mrs. Mortimer sewing close beside her husband; Mrs. O'Brien nodded over a book, and Miss Grant was writing. Captain Jackson tramped the deck with the chief mate. Presently Captain Thompson and Florence came along the poop. It was too dark for me to be sure of them until they were close. Daniel said, 'I have begged Miss Hawke to breathe this beautiful air and survey this calm ocean. But as you are more poetical than I, Jack, I will leave you to point out the wonders of nature, and I am sure you will forgive me, Miss Hawke, for taking advantage of the settled look of the weather to turn in.' And without more ado off he went.

My darling laughed lightly and said, 'What a strange man Captain Thompson is! But I like him very much.'

'I have been waiting about for you,' I exclaimed, 'as if this deck were a country lane in Clifton. It was I who asked Thompson to invite you to take a walk,' and I explained the reason.

'Aunt Damaris would certainly have accompanied me if the captain hadn't sent a very polite message by the steward,' said Florence. 'You are very clever, Jack. Almost too clever for my aunt, I believe.'

'She is not likely to come on deck, is she?'

'No—there is too much dew. I am not to be more than twenty minutes,' she said. 'But this is delightful; I certainly shall not hurry;' and dark as it was, I could see the gleam of starlight in her eyes, as she looked up at the stately, pallid, shadowy heights of canvas silently doing their work, and then round upon the ebony of the sea,

'Will you take my arm? There is heave enough to justify me in asking you.'

She did so instantly, and we slowly patrolled the deck. I talked a deal of impassioned nonsense to her at the first going off: more than I have the conscience to repeat. Loving her as I did, boys, it was perfect happiness to have her sweet hand nestled against my side, her dear face close to me, and to enjoy her company amid a kind of ocean-loneliness, so to speak—for the dark decks and the black sea beyond inspired that feeling—which seemed to bring us closer than ever the land could have done in a commune of that sort. She must have guessed, if she put herself in my company in this way, that I should make love to her, and she let me do so as never had she suffered me before; and after awhile I won from her the admission I had made up my mind to get from her. It came as we stood a minute or two looking at the sea, just abaft the main rigging, where the shadow of the mainsail threw a deep gloom upon the deck; I had her hand in both mine, and, with my lip to her ear, I asked her to tell me she loved me—just to speak the words—that I might be sure her heart was mine, surer than I could be by looking into her eyes.

'Surer!' she whispered, with a little tremble in her hand and in her voice. 'Have you such faith in *words*? But since you wish me to speak—oh, Jack! I am afraid I do love you. You are a wicked boy to have brought me to this confession, but I cannot help myself.'

Well, whether she liked it or not, I had kissed her before the last syllable of her answer was fairly off her darling lips. I was just fit to jump clean overboard in the excess of my joy. Why, I had actually won her heart—won her fairly to love me and to confess it—ay, and to confess it in such a manner that, by the words, by the tremor of the voice, by the whole yielding of herself in the significance of the answer, the sweet and beautiful truth of it was as plain to me as the slice of silver moon that symbolised, as she looked down upon that silent ship and upon the two young lovers on her deck, the first passage of a sentiment that was to become like her full-orbed in time, and as pure too. Won her to love me and to confess it! Think of that, said by Jack Seymour of this beautiful Australian girl, whom, but a few months before, he had hardly dared to lift his most secret dreams to!

It took me some time to collect my mind, to think reasonably, to talk, in short, as if I was not a stark, staring lunatic. We were then walking the deck, and my heart's delight, all her confusion gone, all her embarrassment vanished—thanks to the tender cover of the darkness—was talking to me with a glad light note in her voice, and a sort of freedom and ease as if something that had been between us was removed, as if she felt her heart fairly beating on mine at last.

'But what plans have you, Jack?' she was saying; 'you told me you wanted to talk to me seriously, and so you have, you bad boy; and I also intended to talk to *you* seriously; for what have you done for my sake? You are following me to Australia; what are your plans? I have never liked to ask you this question before, but I do not mind doing so now,' said she, with a little dying away of her rich voice.

'My plans, darling, are to marry you,' said I.

'Oh!' she exclaimed, in a frightened way, 'but you mustn't talk like that. You may say you love me, but you mustn't *dream* of marriage.'

'Why, Florence—confound—ahem! not *dream*!' cried I. 'Why, my own sweet darling, what do you think I love you for, but to be your humble, adoring husband till death parts us.'

'Oh yes! I know,' she cried, still in a very frightened way; 'but I couldn't *think* of marrying you without papa's consent.'

'Well, my darling, we must get it,' said I, feeling somehow as if Murphy's damp swab had been flung at my head, and that it had penetrated to my soul.

'I would go on loving you for ever, Jack, but never could I become your wife without papa's permission,' said she, in a voice of such plaintive melody that the yearning wash of the water alongside and the complaining of the light breeze as it sighed into the glooming folds overhead seemed the fittest accompaniment in the world for it.

'Then, Florence,' said I, 'you must write home to your father from Sydney, tell him I am with you, tell him we are *resolved* to marry, that you can only consent to return to England as my wife; and that letter, coming on top of your aunt's report of Mr. Morecombe, will bring us his consent.'

'He would be more easily influenced by Aunt Damaris than by me,' said Florence. 'Oh, Jack, I wish she knew who you were! As Mr. Egerton, she thinks you a delightful person—she does indeed.'

'But if you told her who I am, Florence,' said I, 'the good impression I have produced would be swallowed up in the earthquake the news would produce in her soul. Will it not be wise for me to go on steadily improving her liking, until I have brought her esteem to such a height that discovery won't affect her?'

'Do you think you'll ever be able to do that, you conceited boy?'

'I don't know, but I can try. What made her shift her seat to-day? She pumped me violently, asked if I was a connection of Lord Egerton, who my father was, and so forth. My darling, don't think me a puppy for the idea that she put into my head, but upon my word and honour, the anxiety she showed to find out all about me, my calling, my social position, my relations and so

forth, was quite enough to cause me to believe that she wouldn't object to a match between us.'

'I thought the same thing when she was talking about you after dinner,' said Florence, simply.

'Well,' said I, lifting the little hand under my arm to my mouth, 'if I can persuade her to believe me good enough for my treasure as Jack Egerton, may not I hope ultimately to prove myself better as Jack Seymour? Suppose my secret is still ours by the time we reach Sydney; she has invited me to call upon her there, she prolongs my chance of improving her friendship. But suppose I were to go to her now and say, "Miss Damaris, my name is not Egerton but Seymour; I am the young man whom my darling's papa objects to; I have no noble blood in me whatever, I am respectable, that's all"—what would happen? There'd be the biggest domestic flare-up that ever took place on the ocean. She'd shove herself between us for the rest of the voyage, and barricade her doors against me when we arrived at Sydney. I have a good three months yet to make her love me as a young man; so, my darling Florence, I am sure I had better remain Mr. Egerton for the present.'

'Very well, Jack; have your own way. But what are your plans?' said she.

'My plans?' I answered; 'do you mean when we reach Australia?'

'Yes.'

'Why, I shall live as close to you as I can, and see you as often as you'll let me, and wait for your father's permission.'

'Oh, how obstinate and determined you are! Suppose papa orders me to return home?'

'Jack goes with his heart's delight, trust him. Wherever she is, he is. There is only one person in this world of millions who can separate me from you, my own.'

'Who is that?' says she, in a whisper of wonder.

'Florence Hawke,' said I.

A tightening of her hand upon my arm was her answer to this. I proceeded: 'My angel, lovers have no plans. They exist by chance and on chance. We are together at this moment by chance, and you will be my own glorious little wife by chance. Could I have planned Morecombe's sea-sickness, his quitting the ship drunk, your aunt's fears and respect for me because she thinks he told me the story of the conspiracy against your darling heart? No! do not ask me what my plans are. I have none. God, who loves honest young loving hearts, will dispose of us, let me propose as I please. If you will be true to me, my own Florence, my wife you are sure to be in the end. Will you be true? Will you always love me, my darling?'

We were in the deep shadow of the mainsail again, the right place for a holy confirmatory kiss; it was given and taken whilst

Captain Jackson and the officer of the watch talked loudly at the other end of the poop, and whilst the helmsman stood black against the stars that slid up and down softly past the taffrail, and whilst the canvas aloft came in to the masts with a kind of sigh against the folds of darkness up there, and the exquisite white chip of new moon swung in the deep indigo of the sky above the topsail yardarm. Presently we were again quietly pacing the deck and talking thus:

‘Did you know, Florence, that your aunt is married in heaven?’

‘No; who married her there, Jack?’

‘She did not say. Probably her husband will be one of those angels who are continually crying. Just before that swab came through the skylight she was exceedingly sentimental; told me of some youth who sleeps in Sydney, and whose grave she has regularly visited once a month for thirteen years.’

‘Oh, I know what you mean!’ said Florence, laughing. ‘There was a poor, sickly, humpbacked musician named Acorn. Aunt Damaris got it into her head that he was deeply in love with her. I never heard that he actually proposed, but they corresponded, and when the poor creature took to his bed she nursed him. Did she tell you of that? How strange! It proves how much she likes you, to be so *very* confidential.’

‘You have no idea, Florence, how sentimental she was. She said they were not married until he was buried, and then they became man and wife. Queer notions of marriage some people have! Murphy’s swab stopped her from seeing him, I think, for she stared up through the skylight as if she expected Acorn to heave in sight. How do you reconcile her sentimentality with her desire to force that idiot Morecombe upon you?’

‘Oh, she is sentimental for herself, not for others, Jack. There are more people like her in the world. . . . Don’t talk to me of Mr. Morecombe! It is cruel that such a wound to one’s pride should be dealt by relatives:’ and she drew herself erect with a note of deep resentment thrilling through her voice.

However, I was now privileged to humour her in the manner that pleased me best, and you may wager I did not long allow my reference to Mr. Morecombe to keep her resentful. Many a half hour did I pass with this darling of mine afterwards, but never a sweeter one than this. Did I say half an hour? It was a mighty long one if that were all of it. I heard two bells go, and then three bells; nine o’clock and half-past nine, boys, and still she was with me. The rim of moon slid down so far that at last it was looking at us out of the liquid black over the slip of topmast stunsail boom on the main yard; the wind had drawn into a steadier gushing and was striking sparks of green fire out of the sea as it blew the heads of the little surges into froth and made a quick glancing of wan light all about over the deep shadow that its own weight put upon the windward water. The ship

leaned lightly over, and was carrying her fabric of glimmering canvas through the night as silently as if a cloud of white vapour rested upon her hull and was impelling her. It was this silence aloft and away out in the darkness through which the stars were shining that seemed to catch the fancy of my darling, for again and again she would come to a stand in a kind of listening posture, though never letting go of my arm, and I could see the sheen in her eyes—caught from her soul and nowhere else, for the light was in them when we stood where no star beams could fall and where there was no lantern radiance—as she lifted them from the black ocean up to where the marble-like sails melted away into vague spaces, breathing slowly as though she saw more in what she looked at than the water, and the darkness, and the whitish loom of a ship's canvas.

She could not have flattered me more sweetly than she did by appearing to pay no heed to the passage of time. Most of our conversation is not a thing to be repeated, even if I could recall it; for my notion is that what passes between lovers is a sacred matter, no matter how foolish their talk might sound. What right have you to expect me to tell you how often I kissed this girl; whether I put my arm round her waist; the vows and hopes I whispered, and her caresses and answers? Why should young people wait until they are alone to talk and behave as sweetheartes, if every squeeze, every sigh, every kiss, every look is to be put down in black and white and given to the world? Would Florence have let me put my lips to her soft cheek, and softer mouth, would she have met as she did all that my love for her had to say, had the sun stood over our mastheads instead of a slip of moon westering fast? No, boys; the darkness hath its secrets, and I'm for letting them be. As much as I choose to tell you you may relish and make the most of, but call me all the loafing land-lubbers you can put your tongue to if you find me burning a flare on the *Strathmore's* poop for no other reason than that all hands may see Jack Seymour and his Australian pearl making love. Nor, after all, might you much thank me for spinning out this yarn by an exact disclosure of a job in the nice handling of which sailor men are but clumsy fists. There were spells of silence between us out and away more poetical and eloquent than the finest language that was ever spoken, and who is going to describe them? When people make love they never talk it as it is written down in books. Not they. There's small heed of grammar; there's too much meaning for long-winded speeches, and most of the sense that's found goes out of the words into a squeeze of the hand, a softening of the eye, the fondling of a wisp of hair over the ear, a blush, a smile, a coming and going of the breath that takes the place of purring among men and women. That's it, boys; and that's how it was with us. Oh, of course there were intervals of sense between us—breakings of fact into our heaven,

like the arrival by balloon of a carful of commercial gents among the angels. We would talk of Clifton, of Aunt Damaris, ay, and of Mr. Alphonso Hawke, and of Emily (very tenderly) and of my uncle and aunt and cousins; but the weight of my passion was always too much for even the sturdiest of such topics, so that we were never long upon any one of them before we had it sloping away under us, and then—plump we would fall into love-making, until a sudden loud call of ‘Lay aft some hands to the weather main braces! Let go your bowlines forward! Look alive, men!’ startled my darling, who, exclaimed, ‘Oh, Jack, what time can it be?’

There was a clock under the skylight. ‘Twenty minutes to ten, Florence.’

‘Is it possible?—then *indeed* I must say good-night. What will my aunt think?’ And as the watch on deck came rumbling aft, sleepily growling as they stepped up the poop ladder, and flinging down the coils of braces as if the thunder of the sound over the heads of the cuddy passengers was an annoyance that did them good to think of, I conducted Florence to the companion, and with a lingering hold of the hand, wished her good-night.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN THE NORTH-EAST TRADES.

FLORENCE and I could not be aboard a ship full of people and so manage our behaviour as to escape their detection of the truth. It would have been impossible. We were put down as people who had fallen in love at first sight, but it does not take folks long to get used to things at sea, and our being seen together every day, I was almost writing every hour, soon made us stale as objects of curiosity, though Daniel told me that at the beginning of the voyage some of the passengers were fond of asking questions about us, Mrs. Marmaduke Mortimer and Mrs. O’Brien in particular; but of course he did not choose to know anything beyond that we were going to Australia in his ship, and that I was an old friend of his whom he had lost sight of for years.

But as I have before said, neither Florence nor I allowed the inspection or inquisitiveness of our cuddy companions to trouble us. But for Aunt Damaris they would have been heartily welcome to the whole story. Yet, although the old lady had not the least imaginable suspicion that I was anybody else but the Mr. John Egerton I represented myself as being, she was not likely to be blinder to what was happening betwixt her niece and me than the others; and this being so it looked uncommonly to me as if matters were drawing up to a head when Florence told me next

morning at breakfast that she had informed her it was I and not Captain Thompson whom she had been on deck with during the previous evening. The old lady was breakfasting in her cabin, and Florence took her place between me and Daniel, and that's how it was I happened at that meal to hear what had passed between them after my sweetheart went below.

'Aunt Damaris,' said Florence, 'was in bed, but wide awake. "What has been keeping you?" she asked. "How late you are! It is too bad that Captain Thompson should detain you for more than an hour in the damp night air. You promised not to be longer than twenty minutes." I answered, "Mr. Egerton joined me, aunt, and I have been walking with him." "And with the captain also?" "No, the captain went to bed shortly after he had brought me on deck." On this, Florence said there was a silence that surprised her, as she expected her aunt would have angrily rapped out at her for being alone in the dark on deck with a young man. 'Mr. Egerton,' said she at last, 'seems to have fallen in love with you.' 'I think he has,' replied Florence in the simple way I could perfectly imagine in her. 'And are you in love with *him*?' asked Aunt Damaris. 'I like him very much,' replied Florence, 'and I really don't see why I should not, considering how warmly you have praised him to me.' 'I certainly have praised him,' said Aunt Damaris, 'and I think he deserves it. He acted very nobly in saving Mrs. Joyce's little child, and his behaviour on that occasion shows that he possesses some very meritorious qualities. He is *quite* a gentleman, at least I think him so, and his manner towards me is full of modesty, respectfulness, and good taste. He tells me that his father is a solicitor, but he is reticent on the subject of his connections. I do not think he is a relative of Lord Egerton; he would say so if he were. I fancy your papa would like him. At all events he is the very antipodes of Mr. Morecombe, which, after my experience of that wretch, is the most pleasing thing I could desire in a young man. Are you encouraging him, Florence?' 'Well, aunt, I like him,' replied Florence; 'and when one likes a person one can't help enjoying his company.' Here Aunt Damaris fell silent awhile, and then said, 'I don't know what to do, I'm sure. I'm in your papa's place, and should like to counsel you as he would. I certainly think Mr. Egerton a gentleman and an agreeable young man. But pray don't encourage him too pointedly, please. I want to know more of him, to see into his character, and ascertain his true position in society. Perhaps his friend, Captain Thompson, will tell me about him. There is plenty of time; the voyage is only begun, and I have invited him to call upon me at Sydney, you know.'

This was the gist of what passed, and my darling's comment upon it to me was, 'I was sure, Jack, from a something I cannot describe in her manner, that she was thinking of you—I mean of

the *real* you—Jack Seymour, dear. Mr. Morecombe is lost to us, you see, and my aunt will think of course that when I return to England I shall carry with me a heart unchanged for Sophie's sailor cousin; and consequently the genteel and evidently well-connected Mr. Egerton would be so superior as a lover to the Jack Seymour whom poor Aunt Damaris had been made to think of as a vulgar insulting person, that it is a question for her to consider whether, if I choose to accept his refined attentions and to fall in love with him, she ought to interfere.'

This was like a revelation to me, for, to speak the truth, I was so puzzled by my own identity that I would quite forget that one reason Mr. Hawke had in sending his daughter to Australia was to get rid of me, whilst it almost defied me to realise that Aunt Damaris would consider me as Jack Egerton such a substitute for me as Jack Seymour as would be very acceptable to Alphonso, who wanted breeding and name in a man. You see it is hard to think of yourself as two persons; but when my darling, with the sagacity of a clever little woman, had interpreted one idea at least that lay in her aunt's mind, I found on a sudden the old lady's politeness to me and her apparent disregard of my transparent enjoyment of her niece's company vastly more intelligible than when explained merely by the circumstance of my having borrowed an aristocratic name and of knowing all about the plot which had brought her and her niece and Morecombe together in one ship.

We took the north-east trades in twenty-seven and a half degrees north latitude, and carried them down to the parallel of Sierra Leone. In all that while nothing happened outside or inside the ship to call for particular notice. I never lost a chance of being with my darling whether on deck or in the cuddy, and my opportunities were perhaps improved by the circumstance of Aunt Damaris taking a cold that kept her in her cabin for a week, though I do not know, had she been well, that she would have checked my constant association with Florence. Before she took cold her behaviour to me was quite gracious, and so far as my darling and I were concerned, her attitude gave me the notion that she had made up her mind to let things 'slide.' Sometimes she would take her place between Daniel and me, sometimes seat herself on Daniel's right, with a capriciousness that indicated a mind not wholly resolved. Whenever she sat next to me she would be constantly making experiments in the shape of carelessly put questions touching my past life. I cannot remember that I fibbed, I hope I didn't; but I was exceedingly cautious in my replies. I gave room for her imagination to tumble about in by artfully importing a certain large ambiguity into my answers, so that she was never in a position to say that I was *not* highly connected, and not in other ways more important than I chose to let her know, though I also took care that she should never afterwards be able to charge me with having told her a real caulker.

A day or two after her talk with Florence in her cabin, she sounded Daniel about me, as my friend made haste to let me know. I was with my darling on deck, looking over the stern at the hollow green seas and the Mother Carey's chickens flashing through the spray in the wake of the ploughing keel. My friend rolled up to us and said: 'Jack, Miss Damaris Hawke has been asking me questions about you, my lad. She met me coming out of my cabin, hauled me to the table and fired away. Have you told her that you're the son of a nobleman?'

'Certainly not,' I replied, looking from him to Florence, who was watching him with laughing eyes.

'Well, then, she seems to have some notion of that kind in her head,' said Thompson. 'She says to me, "Weren't you at school with him, captain?" and I answered yes, for what is a ship but a school, and a mighty rough one too, and Jack and I were at sea together, Miss Florence, as of course you have heard. "Did you know his father?" said she. No, ma'am, said I. "He is a solicitor, he says." Ay, and a first-class solicitor too, I answered. "He is a most gentlemanly young man," says she, kind of sounding me, "and I wish you could tell me more about him, for his gallant exploit the other day, coupled with his politeness to me, has made me feel very much interested in him." Well, you may suppose I wasn't going to swallow *that* view of it,' said Daniel, with his beaming face turned full upon Florence, who was biting her lip with a look of mingled merriment and confusion; 'I quite understood what she was driving at, and if I hadn't been afraid of putting my foot in it by contradicting something you might have told her, I could have spun her on the spot a tiptop yarn about you, Jack—something to make her hair curl. For, my dear fellow, if she wants you to be a lord's connection, *be* one, man—eh, Miss Florence? Hang it! if it be true that we all come from Adam and Eve, then who's going to call me a liar if I say that the Queen of England's my sister?'

'I am glad you didn't invent,' said I, laughing. 'If no more passed between you than what you have related, then you gave her no information at all.'

'Well, I didn't commit myself,' he answered; 'I didn't say you *were* a nobleman's eldest son; but as I'm glad to give an old shipmate a hand, I just turned to and gave her my opinion of you, cracking you up in a speech that lasted so long that before I had come to the end of it I had worked a look into her face that was like asking me to hold my jaw. And don't you deserve all the good I can say of you? I am sure Miss Florence thinks so;' and with a comical bow to her, and a loud genial laugh, the large-hearted little fellow stumped off, instantly forgetting all about us no doubt as he rolled his eyes along the ridged horizon to windward and took a skipper's squint at the set of the booming canvas.

But as I have said, I lost sight of Aunt Damaris when the north-east trades began to blow, and heard of her only through Florence, who reported her as very peevish and quarrelsome, her nose of a fiery red, her eyes streaming, and her voice little more than a kind of decayed hoarseness. I was careful to send my respectful compliments and sympathetic inquiries to her again and again, but I will not pretend that I lamented her absence. Hour after hour Florence and I were together, until Mrs. O'Brien would look as if she felt it her duty to come up and congratulate us, whilst Mrs. Marmaduke Mortimer would simper up at us from her book or work as we passed, with an air of languishing encouragement and sympathy that was as comical as it was kind.

The trade wind blew nobly; it swept over us a couple of points abaft the port beam in a swinging torrent that kept the brave fabric humming and roaring day and night. We carried royals and fore-topmast stunsail to it, and with a sort of leaning down of her nose, and heel enough to give her keen stem the slanting leverage it wanted to tear the emerald seas into snowstorms, the *Strathmore* drove along with a thrilling through the length of her that was like the chattering of your teeth, and a noise of thunder aloft as if every ivory-hard rounded sail held a storm in its hollow. I remember one day standing with my darling—who never seemed to tire of the beautiful sight the ship and the sea made, whether in calm or storm—near the wheel, watching the whole length of the vessel sweeping with long floating lurches athwart the surges. I had my eyes on her sweet face, standing out with delicate clearness against the greenish sky over the rail, and was studying with a lover's delight the varying moods in it as she would look from the height of the gleaming royals to the hissing and seething yeast that spread away from where the lee cathead overhung the water with a broad swirl of giddy dazzling white.

Suddenly she said, 'Does not the ship look grander from the other end there,' pointing to the fore-castle, 'where she would seem to be coming towards you with her noble sails swelling out instead of always being in hollows as we see them here?'

'We can soon satisfy ourselves on that point,' said I, 'if you'll take my arm and go with me there.'

'But the men, Jack—'

'My darling, we're not going aloft: there'll be no footing to pay,' said I, laughing, and catching up her hand and putting it under my arm. She hung in the wind a bit as if she was afraid; she had never left the poop before, and 'Oh, Jack! what would the men say? Would they be rude?' I conquered her timidity at last, and, singing out to Mr. Thornton that I was going to show Miss Hawke what the sea looked like under the bows—for he stared to see me leading her down the poop-ladder—we gained the quarter-deck and went along the waist to the fore-castle ladder.

The 'tween-deck passengers were hanging about, chiefly to leeward out of the way of the wind, smoking and talking, the women nursing babies or watching their youngsters cutting capers in the scuppers. Florence was critically eyed as she passed along, her dress, from the feather in her hat to her little boots, being attentively scanned by those of her own sex amongst the poor people, and I noticed a deal of admiration in the looks of the men, along with a peering past of one another to follow her beautiful figure, whilst they muttered their approval. When we came to the galley I stopped to show her the ship's kitchen; the boatswain stood in the lee door taking a few furtive pulls at a sooty pipe, and talking to the cook and the baker, who lounged against a sort of dresser with their bare pale arms crossed upon their shirts.

'How are you, Shilling?' said I. 'Cook, beg pardon for intruding. I want to show this lady where all the beautiful dinners you send us aft come from.'

The boatswain put his pipe up his sleeve and respectfully flourished his thumb up at his moleskin cap. 'Glad to see ye forrard, Mr. Seymour,' said he: and then, sucking in his cheeks with a glance of alarm at Florence, 'Hegerton I mean, sir. Why, shiver my topsails, as stage sailors say, where's my old memory a-wandering not to recall that Hegerton's the word, and Hegerton it is.'

'We're going to have a look at your ship from the fore-castle, Shilling,' said I, winking to him not to feel distressed. 'Meanwhile, Miss Hawke,' said I, mighty polite before these men, 'what do you think of this sea-kitchen—caboose the old word is? Do you see those big coppers there? That is where Jack's pea-soup, and his pork and beef and duff are boiled. Oh! you should taste those delicacies. Cook, once upon a time a rough sailor man pulled the likeness of the hull of a Chinese junk out of his bosom and asked me what it was made of. I smelt and peered, and said, why, it looks like a piece of teak that's been fished up out of the bed of the ocean. "Nothing of the kind," says he; "it's a bit of the salt beef that was served out to the crew in the last ship I was in, and I'm going to make a will all about this here bit of beef and nothing else—for it's all I own—and bequeath it to the British Museum, as the gift of an English sailor to the people of the United Kingdom." What do you think of that, cook?'

'Think?' answered the cook, who had a rather sour eye; 'why, that that rough sailor man was a-coddin' of you, sir.'

'No, no!' exclaimed the boatswain; 'coddin'! why, I've been shipmates with beef that hard ye might have carved it into bricks and built gentlemen's willas with it.'

Here some of the emigrants came shuffling behind the boatswain and peering over him in order to see what was going forward; so I made haste to call Florence's attention to the pots and pans, and odds and ends of this marine kitchen, and then,

passing my arm through hers, helped her up the ladder until she stood upon that raised structure in the bows of a ship called by the name of top-gallant fore-castle, and corresponding with the elevated after-deck named the poop. There is all the difference in the world betwixt the fore and hinder parts of a ship, and the distinction is never more felt than when the vessel is at sea, sailing along. Aft, everything is neat and clean and sparkling: ropes carefully coiled, deck white, and a glimpse of carpets and fine furniture through the brilliant skylights. But the fore-castle is Jack's home, and the roof of his tapering habitation has as rough and coarse a look as the interior. The great anchors lie stowed behind the rails; the capstan has a rude appearance; maybe you'll find a pair of dungaree breeches and a shirt or two swelling out upon the fore-stay; the giant bowsprit and jibboom fork far away out, and the landsman's eye is bewildered by the complication of shrouds, guys, footropes, bobstays, which come into the ship from the vast spars.

'What is that hole there?' asked Florence, pointing with one hand and keeping tight hold of me with the other.

'A hatch called the foreshuttle; one of the doors which lead into the sailor's parlour and bedroom;' and I conducted her to the edge of it, and we peered into what looked as dark as a pocket, with a streak of light falling down upon a dark-green seaman's chest just below. An instant after a grimy Scandinavian face looked up at us out of a mop of sprawling red curls; whereupon we drew back, for, hard as the shoregoing mind may find this saying to accept, it is nevertheless true that the sailor is a human being, duly endowed with sensitiveness, and that he does not like people to peep and stare at him in his sea-home as if he were a bearded woman in a cage or a Chinese dwarf in a booth. There were one or two seamen at work on the fore-castle, but no notice was taken of us beyond the sidelong squint which salts have a knack at throwing at you over the bronzed lump that stands for the outline of a junk of tobacco between the jaws.

'The right place to see the ship is from that spar yonder,' said I, pointing to the flying jibboom; 'were there only a lady's saddle aboard, and I could manage to seat you there, you'd enjoy such a dancing gallop through the air, with this great ship thundering after you in your wake, and the sky opening ahead of you to receive your darling form as you come, that you'd have to go back to the time of the Arabian Nights to meet with such another flying steed.'

'Oh, I never could get out there!' cried my pet, rounding her beautiful eyes at the distant dancing boom.

'No, and I don't mean that you should try,' said I. 'But come with me—I'll show you all that is to be seen;' and I took her to the lee rail, clear of the clew of the topmast staysail, and pointed aloft,

Upon my word it was a noble sight, well worth the journey to the forecastle. The trade wind had settled broad abeam within the past two hours, and the yards were braced far enough forward to enable us to see past the lee leeches as far as the mizen-topsail. The ship under royals and fore-topmast stunsail was flashing her lee channels through the leaping, blowing smother of white; the huge sails went leaning up, one above another, and one yardarm passed another, until the blue sky, along which the trade clouds were driving seemed to be a vast surface of canvas: the sun was to leeward of the royal-mastheads, and the white light poured down with a sort of blazing gushing upon the bosoms of the sails, leaving the foot of them in shadow against the dazzling azure which swept between the straight black lines of the yards and the rounded bottoms of the cloths; every staysail was in gloom and stood in superb curves like delicate pencil-drawings; up behind the heads of the inner and outer jibs you saw the fore-topmast stunsail pulling like an imprisoned cloud at its slender boom; and looking from there to the end of the long, slightly-bowed spars which shot out of the forecastle betwixt the knight-heads and soared above the line of the horizon, you ran your eye over the flight of carved-like, steady staysail and jibs pointing one above another, one darkening a space of the brilliant white of the next with the shadow of its clew, whilst, like the swing of a pendulum, these gleaming wings swept and soared over the deep, clear, yeasty ocean blue, that ran away up the dolphin-striker until the horizon stood as high as the junction of the bob-stays upon that outrigger. But the wonder and delight of this most beautiful sea-picture lay, not alone in the thunderous heights of canvas; whatever the eye sought yielded a charm; in the sparkling upon the decks, as the slanting heave of the ship shifted the dancing sunshine along her; in the heap of gem-like white water rushing in whirlpools past the line of her bulwark-rails; in the play of surges smoothly rolling away to leeward, but coming along on the weather side in curved blue ridges that grew into a transparent green under the bows, every surge with a blowing of crystal smoke about its luminous brow, and here and there a fragment of rainbow that swept along for a breath with the wind, and went out like the flying-fish that sparkled in silver showers from the violet-coloured slant of the seas in a clear leap across the fresh foam of the melting crests, and a vanishing flash into the dark gleaming blue of the billow beyond.

(To be continued.)

A Song in Three Parts.

I.

THE white broom flatt'ring her flowers in calm June weather,
 'O most sweet wear!
 Forty-eight weeks of my life do none desire me,
 Four am I fair.'

Quoth the brown bee,
 'In thy white wear
 Four thou art fair.
 A mystery
 Of honeyed snow
 And scented air.
 The bee-lines flow
 Straight unto thee,
 Great boon and bliss,
 All pure I wis
 And sweet to grow;
 Ay, so to give
 That many live.

Now as for me,
 I, quoth the bee,
 'Have not to give.
 Through long hours sunny
 Gathering I live,
 Aye, debonair,
 Sailing sweet air
 After my fare,
 Bee-bread and honey.
 In thy deep coombe,
 O, thou white broom,
 Where no leaves shake,
 Brake,

A SONG IN THREE PARTS.

Bent, nor clover,
 I, a glad rover,
 Thy calms partake,
 While winds of might
 From height to height
 Go bodily over,
 Till slanteth light,
 And up the rise
 Thy shadow lies,
 A shadow of white,
 A beauty lender,
 Pathetic, tender.

Short is thy day?
 Answer with "nay!"
 Longer the hours
 That wear thy flowers
 Than all dull, cold
 Years manifold
 That gift withhold.
 A long liver,
 O honey-giver,
 Thou, by all showing,
 Art made, bestowing.
 I envy not
 Thy loftier lot
 Nor thy white wear.
 But, as for me,
 I, 'quoth the bee,
 'Never am fair.'

II.

The nightingale, lorn of his note, in darkness brooding,
 Deeply and long,
 'Two sweet months spake the heart to the heart: Alas! all's over.
 O lost my song.'

One in the tree:
 'Hush now, let be:
 The song at ending
 Left my long tending

Over alsò.
Let be, let us go
Across the wan sea.
The little ones care not,
And I fare not
Amiss, with thee.

Thou hast sung all,
This hast thou had.
Love, be not sad.
It shall befall,
Assuredly,
When the bush buddeth
And the bank studdeth,
Where grass is sweet
And damps do fleet,
Her delicate beds
With daisy heads,
That the stars seven
Leaned out of heaven,
Shall sparkling mark,
In the warm-dark,
Thy most dear strain,
That ringeth aye true,
Piercing dale, croft,
Lifted aloft,
Dropt, even as dew,
With a sweet quest
To her on the nest
When damps we love
Fall from above—
“Art thou asleep?
Answer me, answer me;
Night is so deep
Thy right fair form
I cannot see,
Answer me, answer me:
Are the eggs warm?
Is’t well with thee?”

Ay, this shall be,
Assuredly.

A SONG IN THREE PARTS.

Ay, thou full fain
In the soft rain,
Shalt sing again.'

III.

A fair wife making her moan, despised, forsaken,
Her good days o'er,
'Seven sweet years of my life did I live beloved—
Seven, no more.'

Then echo woke, and spoke,
'No more, no more.'
And a wave broke
On the sad shore,
When echo said,
'No more.'
Nought else made reply,
Nor land, nor loch, nor sky,
Did any comfort try;
But the wave spread
Echo's faint tone
Alone,
All down the desolate shore,
'No more, no more.'

JEAN INGELow.

*The Witchery of Archery.*¹

OF all the sports which are followed in this sport-loving age, none can boast a more honourable tradition than archery. In the dim ages, before the dawn of civilisation, the bow and the arrow were the weapons with which the hunter gained his food and the warrior met his foe. They became the weapons of civilised warfare and held their place till the time came when villainous saltpetre drove them out and they had to give way to the more deadly rifle. Even in the days of Brown Bess there were those who held that the bow would still be of use as a weapon of war, and it may be doubted whether the late Mr. Horace Ford with his bow would not have rendered a good account of a musketeer armed with the erratic blunderbuss. Modern science has, however, settled the question, and the bow survives as the weapon of savage tribes in remote corners of the globe, and as an instrument of sport in civilised nations. But to its devotees archery is still the king of sports. Where archers are gathered together there is nothing but good fellowship and friendly rivalry. The man who loves horse-racing (and who does not?) is haunted by the yells and execrations of the betting men and the tainted atmosphere of the turf. Even the gunner cannot quite put away from his mind at times some thoughts of the feelings of a winged bird. Nothing human is perfect, and no doubt every sport has its drawbacks; but I confess that after shooting enough arrows to have laid low the entire host of Sennacherib I have not yet found out those of archery.

The rifleman may claim for his weapon that its range is greater and that it shoots more accurately than the bow. The first position may be granted freely, the second only with reserve. Given a well-made weapon of Flemish or Italian yew and arrows of the best modern make, and the accuracy of the bow is measured by the skill of the shooter. If he can loose his arrow truly

¹ *The Witchery of Archery*, by Maurice Thompson: New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. *Songs of Fair Weather*, same author: Boston, James R. Osgood & Co.

it will hit the mark ; more than that can be said of no weapon on this score. That a rifleman will shoot more accurately at ranges well within the power of the bow than an archer of similar skill is certain, but the reason is that the bow is the more difficult and perhaps to some minds on that account the more fascinating weapon. The reason why it is more difficult is obvious, and in stating it we see one of the many charms of archery. The rifleman has but to aim straight and to hold steady while he fires ; if he does this he hits the bull's-eye. But the archer has also to supply the motive force which propels his arrow. As he watches the graceful flight of a well-shot shaft he can feel a pride in its swiftness and strength which the rifleman cannot share. The latter sees the marker put a white disc upon the marking board and believes that he has hit a corresponding spot on the target, but he has not experienced the exquisite pleasure of watching the flight of his missile, and he knows that the force which impelled it was not supplied by the strength of his muscles, but was due to the honesty of some workman in the employ of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey or the E.C. Company.

Fabulous tales have been told from time immemorial of the distances which have been fetched by famous archers of other days. One of the ballads in 'Robin Hood's Garland' sings of the father of the famous outlaw :

The father of Robin a forester was,
And he shot in a lusty strong bow
Two North-country miles and an inch at a shoot,
As the Pindar of Wakefield does know.

The extra inch seems to betoken more careful measurement than would be considered necessary now-a-days. But by this account Robin Hood himself was not so good a man as his sire, for his greatest exploit in flight shooting seems to have been when he and Little John shot each an arrow from the top of Whitby Abbey, which fell not far from Whitby Laths ; and in memorial thereof a pillar was set up by the Abbot in the place where the arrows fell ; and their distance from the abbey was a measured mile. Even this shot, however, puts too great a strain on my faith. Perhaps I ought to apologise for even mentioning the mighty Robin, for modern science has decided that he is but a sun myth. What the good folk of Yorkshire and the neighbouring counties knew in the fourteenth century about the Sun God and the Dawn Maiden I know not. But I read in the 'Academy'

newspaper, in some letters from Mr. H. Bradley, that the whole story is 'ultimately derived from the great Aryan sun-myth.' Robin Hood, it appears, is Hód (the Hôdeken of Germany), a degraded form of the god of the wind, Hermes-Woden. Alas, poor Robin! Maid Marian is nothing but Morgen, the inevitable Dawn Maiden. Friar Tuck, good cheery soul, is Frer-Toki, the spirit of frost and snow. I am no mythologist: still less am I capable of following the vagaries of the devotees of the great Aryan Solar-myth. But facts are facts, and I wish that mythologists would look at the question from the prosaic historical point of view before they demolish my elementary articles of faith. If Mr. Bradley had read the admirable tract in which the Rev. J. Hunter has threshed out this question (in 1852), perhaps he would not have thought it necessary to bring Hôdeken into the matter.

Mr. Hunter has analysed the ballads and summed up their testimony. He has shown what is the historical evidence in support of the tradition and of the ballads. He tells the story, from the ballads, of how the king in disguise seeks out Robin Hood in the forest; how there is a shooting contest, and how the king wins Robin's respect by the force of the buffet he gives him as the penalty for missing the mark. The king then discloses himself, and grants Robin pardon on condition of his leaving the greenwood and coming to Court in his service. Mr. Hunter then proceeds to show that 'Edward our comely king,' of the ballad,¹ could have been none but Edward the Second. Many circumstances point to this conclusion, but the fact that the king in the ballads made a progress in Lancashire and Nottinghamshire, and that Edward the Second only, of the first three Edwards, did so, settles it. He further shows that this progress was made in the year 1323, and that in the year 1324 appears in the king's accounts, *for the first time*, the payment of wages amongst the other porters of the chamber to Robyn Hod, and Simon Hod. Much more may be said on this question, but those who doubt the historical existence of Robin Hood may be referred to Mr. Hunter's tract.

It is not necessary for those who cling to their belief in the outlaw's actual existence to swallow all the marvellous tales of his skill. No doubt he was a great archer in his day. The pity of it is that we have not more accurate records of what the archers and the bows of that day could perform. No one believes that Robin Hood shot a mile. At the present time distance or flight shooting is not

¹ 'A Lytell Geste of Robin Hode, 7th Fytte.'

much practised. The Turks have the credit of being able to shoot vast distances, but amongst the Ottomans skill in archery seems to be progressive. Each sultan on acceding to the throne is expected to display his prowess with the bow. He shoots a shaft, and the distance is measured. Curiously enough, the reigning monarch has always been found to excel his predecessors, so that the record now stands at a prodigious figure. It is possible that if the official whose business it is to measure the length, reported unfavourably on the monarch's shot, he might find that a bowstring in Eastern countries has more uses than one, and this thought may unconsciously bias his mind. But this is only conjecture.

Now-a-days I imagine that 400 yards is beyond the power of man to compass. I have but seldom tried my hand at flight shooting, but with light flight-arrows and a bow pulling 62 lbs. I shot 286 yards last April. The air was nearly calm, and there was but three or four yards' difference in shooting up and down. With a little practice, I fancy that I could reach 300 yards. There are strong men who can pull a bow of 70 lbs. or 75. With such a weapon they could probably reach 350 yards, and possibly more. But when it is measured out, 286 yards seems a long way to send so slight a thing as a flight-arrow, and those who can follow the shaft in its flight through the heavens till it finally reaches the earth have good eyesight.

But at these distances no sort of accuracy is attainable. For target-shooting, the best ranges are from one hundred to sixty yards. It is true that two very strong bodies of archers shoot at longer ranges. The Royal Company of Scottish Archers, which was founded in 1676, shoot matches at nine score yards, as do the Woodmen of Arden, also an ancient body—their very name seems to smack of Shakespeare. But shooting at these ranges is very uncertain work, and the general body of British archers hold to the orthodox York round, in which six dozen arrows are discharged at one hundred, four dozen at eighty, and two dozen at sixty yards. The corresponding 'national' round for ladies consists of four dozen arrows at sixty and two dozen at fifty yards. It would, perhaps, be better for the progress of archery if the two strong bodies we have mentioned would practise these lengths. They would then be able to make a better show when they send their champions to meet the crack shots at the public meetings.

Archery has never ceased to be practised since the days when a scanty band of English archers routed the French hosts at Agincourt. But at the end of the last century a great revival took

place. Archery was taken up by the Court, and everyone shot, as now-a-days everyone plays lawn-tennis. The day may not be far distant when everyone again will learn the use of the bow. Fashions change, different amusements have their day, but the twang of the bowstring and the rush of the arrow's flight have always charmed mankind. It is curious that at the period of which I speak, when everyone used the bow, they should have shot so badly. Certainly, if one refers to the books of instruction in use at the time, the marvel is lessened. When young archers were told to pull to the ear, a position in which it is impossible for the eye to look straight along the arrow as if it were the barrel of a rifle, one cannot wonder that they did not shoot straight. When the tyro was told to let the string strike hard against a smooth arm-guard in order that, rebounding, it may have a sharper shoot, it is not to be expected that his arrows would fly steadily. And, as a matter of fact, they did not. Archers continued in this slough of despond until the man came, and the hour.

The late Mr. Horace Ford was the founder of modern scientific archery. His name represents in archery what that of Cavendish does in whist. First by example and then by precept, he changed what before was 'playing at bows and arrows' into a scientific pursuit.

Mr. Ford held the Champion's medal for eleven years in succession, from 1849 to 1859. He also won it again in 1867. After this time, although he was seen occasionally in the archery-field, his powers began to wane. He died in the year 1880, and his best scores have never been surpassed. But, although no one has risen who can claim that on him has fallen the mantle of Ford, his work was not in vain. Thanks to the more scientific and rational principles laid down by this great archer, any active lad now-a-days can, with a few months' practice, make scores which would have been thought fabulous when George III. was king.

In the early days of the Grand National Meetings, the championship was won with scores of between 500 and 600 on the double York Round, and this was an improvement on previous shooting. Now-a-days a man who cannot make 700 is not in the first ten; and, moreover, the level continues to rise, although we have not yet found a man capable of beating in public the marvellous score of 1,251, made by Mr. Ford at Cheltenham in 1857. Perhaps I shall live to see it done. Possibly a young and most

promising archer, who has only lately joined the ranks of the Toxophilites, may be the man. But these things are 'in the ink bottle,' as the saying is, and it is best to follow Lord Beaconsfield's maxim, and 'never prophesy unless you know.'

The head-quarters of archery are the Royal Toxophilite Society's grounds at the Archers' Lodge in the Regent's Park. This society does not occupy quite the position which the Marylebone Club does in cricket, inasmuch as it has no legislative or judicial functions. Each club makes its own laws, and enforces its own discipline. Fortunately archers are a peaceable and law-abiding body, and the need for a central authority has never arisen, to my knowledge. But the Archers' Lodge is the bowman's Mecca. To that society most of the celebrated English archers have belonged for the last hundred years, and their archives teem with the records of famous matches of other days. The Society have now been installed in their present grounds for fifty years: this autumn they will celebrate their jubilee; and the members of the 'Tox' ask for no better company and no more cheery meetings than are to be found at their target days or handicaps. I well remember a conversation I once held with one of our members, Thomas Woodbine Hinchliff. He was a mighty traveller, a pioneer of Alpine climbing, and at home in every quarter of the globe. He said to me one day, when he had just returned from South America, that, on reaching England, his first pilgrimage was to the 'Tox,' which he regarded, as the Americans do Boston, as the hub of the universe. He was my first instructor in the noble art—I still have the bow he gave me. Peace be to his ashes, for his gallant heart has ceased to beat. He had many acquaintances, and, what can be said of few, all his acquaintances were friends.

I think Hinchliff's feeling towards the 'Tox' was not exaggerated. The Society hold their corner of ground by lease from the Crown. It is bounded on two sides by the road, on the third by the ornamental water, and on the fourth, or narrow end, it borders on the park. It is said that there may be some difficulty in renewing the lease when it expires some years hence. But our ground obstructs no man: it is merely an out-of-the-way corner of a large park. It is to be hoped that no Government will be found to deal so grievous a blow to an ancient and honourable pastime as to refuse the lease. Archery has played so great a share in the making of England that its modern devotees deserve this small indulgence. But sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.

Our American cousins have not been ashamed to borrow many English customs, and amongst them they have taken up of recent years the practice of archery. Many clubs have been formed, and every year a national meeting is held. The average level of their shooting is not yet so good as it is in the old country; but it is rising, and last year their championship was won with a really excellent score. They have also begun to add to the literature of archery. I have taken the title which I have placed at the head of this paper from a charming little book by Mr. Maurice Thompson. Mr. Thompson and his brother are two well-known target shots in America, but their enthusiasm for the sport is such that they have made many a hunting expedition into the backwoods armed only with their trusty bows. His book is pervaded with that brotherhood and good fellowship which I believe to grow with a love of archery. Mr. Thompson tells a pathetic incident, which occurred when he and his brother William were practising at a target on a lawn. A miserably clad and hungry-looking tramp approached and stood watching them. I quote Mr. Thompson's words:

‘Finally, as if impelled by an irresistible interest, he said:

“Archery is a noble sport.”

‘We turned and looked at him in surprise. He waved his hand in a peculiarly graceful way, and, in a sad voice, said:

“On Brighton sands I have seen good shooting. I have shot there myself.”

“In England?” asked Will.

“Yes,” he replied. “I am a gentleman.”

Will smiled doubtfully.

“Would you let me shoot once?” he said.

‘There was sincerity in his voice. Will handed his bow and arrow. He took them eagerly, almost snatching them. For a moment he stood as if irresolute; then, quickly fixing the arrow on the string, drew and let fly. The movements were those of a trained archer. The distance was forty yards, and he hit the gold in its very centre.’

Some of Messrs. Thompson's experiences on the lakes of Florida are very thrilling. These lakes seem the very paradise of the sportsman. Camping out under a sky of perpetual summer, with vegetation variegated and luxuriant, amidst gorgeous flowers and gay foliage, and with wildfowl swarming, and an infinity of bass and trout, these enterprising gentlemen were certainly to be envied. They seem to have killed plenty of game for food

and for trophies. If the number of their victims fell short of those at a December battue in England, at any rate each successful shot gave them a more lively satisfaction. Perhaps the most thrilling moment was when the arrow struck the great snowy heron. 'It was a shot to delight the gods. The dull recoil sound of my bow was followed by a quick whisper, and then a dead, solid blow, a "chuck" once heard, never forgotten. The feathers puffed out and sailed slowly away in a widening ring. The big wings opened wide and quivered a moment, then the grand old fellow toppled over, and came straight down with a loud plash, plash into the water. I yelled like a savage—I couldn't help it; it stirred me to the core.' After this our author may really be excused for breaking out into four pages of excellent poetry on the death of the great white heron.

This noble bird was perched on a tree when he met his fate; but these sportsmen killed many and many a quarry on the wing, which speaks volumes for their skill. One day they were shooting on a salt meadow where marsh hens were very abundant in the rushes. Mr. Maurice Thompson's score was ninety-eight shots, seventy-seven arrows lost, and sixteen birds killed on the wing. This was his best performance in shooting flying, and it is a remarkable one. At another time, when he was out duck-shooting, two mallards were flying directly at him, rising higher and higher as they neared. 'I prepared for them, and shot at an angle of forty-five degrees, striking one of them through with a very heavy broad-headed arrow from a seventy-pound bow. He was very high, and came whirling down in a way that made my nerves tingle with delight.' This was, of course, a lucky hit, as many a man would have missed such a chance with a shot gun, and few, perhaps, save Dr. Carver, would have hit it with a rifle. But it was none the less satisfactory.

Mr. Maurice Thompson has also published a dainty little volume of poems, entitled 'Songs of Fair Weather,' many of which refer to his favourite sport. One of these, which breathes a strain of genuine good fellowship, I will take the liberty of quoting entire, and with this bid him a kindly farewell.

A FLIGHT SHOT.

We were twin brothers, tall and hale,
Glad wanderers over hill and dale.

We stood within the twilight shade
Of pines that rimmed a Southern glade.

He said, 'Let's settle, if we can,
Which of us is the stronger man.

We'll try a flight shot, high and good,
Across the green glade toward the wood.'

And so we bent in sheer delight
Our old yew bows with all our might.

Our long keen shafts, drawn to the head,
Were poised a moment ere they sped.

As we leaned back, a breath of air
Mingled the brown locks of our hair.

We loosed. As one our bow-cords rang,
As one away our arrows sprang.

Away they sprang; the wind of June
Thrilled to their softly whistled tune.

We watched their flight, and saw them strike
Deep in the ground slantwise alike;

So far away that they might pass
For two thin straws of broom-sedge grass!

Then arm-in-arm we doubting went
To find whose shaft was farthest sent;

Each fearing in his loving heart
That brother's shaft had fallen short.

But who could tell by such a plan
Which of us was the stronger man?

There at the margin of the wood,
Side by side our arrows stood,

Their red cock feathers wing and wing,
Their amber nocks still quivering,

Their points deep-planted where they fell,
An inch apart and parallel!

We clasped each other's hands; said he,
'Twin champions of the world are we!'

CHARLES JAMES LONGMAN.

Earthquakes in England.

THE recent earthquake has reminded us that though Great Britain is not a region where earthquakes are common, it is far from being altogether safe from the action of subterranean disturbances. Only sixteen years ago an area about one hundred and fifty miles in length and some seventy miles wide—at least 10,500 square miles in extent—was disturbed in the West of England by a sharp earthquake shock, and now the eastern earthquake region has been shaken over an area about as large and with much greater violence. We are thus shown that subterranean forces are still at work beneath that part of the earth's crust which forms our right little, and, on the whole, tight little island. The study of the crust in mining operations shows that in past ages England, Scotland, and Wales have undergone much more violent disturbances. Yet the consideration of the history of British earthquakes during the last ten centuries serves to render it at least highly probable that our country is safe from those fierce convulsions which in other countries have sufficed in a few minutes to turn the best built cities into heaps of ruins.

It should, however, be noticed that it would be unwise to infer from the mere slightrness of local evidences of disturbance that the shock to which a British earthquake has been due may be regarded as of slight importance. It is true, as I pointed out several years since in discussing this point, that the fall of a building, the explosion of a magazine, and even the passing of a heavy vehicle, will produce effects apparently more marked than those noticed locally during some of our British earthquakes. Nay, it is noteworthy that, though much more remarkable effects were produced during the earthquake of last April than have commonly been noticed, yet nine persons out of ten within the region over which the effects of the earthquake extended were totally unaware of the fact that there had been an earthquake till they heard of it from the newspapers. But the inference from such facts as these that an earthquake may indicate very slight subterranean forces would be altogether unsound. A shock felt

over 10,000 square miles of surface arises from no slight cause, and can in no way be compared with disturbances which are felt over a few hundreds of square yards, or over a few square miles at the outside. The wide extension of a disturbance seems to explain why the local effects may not be very great, even though the subterranean energies at work have been considerable; for we may be sure that the source of the disturbance lies deep down below the surface of the earth, even if it be not—as in some cases it certainly has been—far distant from our own country, and as it were coming only to the surface here.

More than three hundred earthquakes have been recorded as having occurred in Great Britain (the papers recently said 255, but must have derived their information from a tolerably ancient source). The direction in which the wave of disturbance has travelled has in nearly every instance been found to be from south-west to north-east, and the region affected has usually had its greatest extension in the same direction. It has been suggested that the centre of disturbance thus indicated is the submarine region between the Azores, Teneriffe, and the Cape Verde islands—a region which has been regarded as the principal source of the chief European earthquakes. In the great Lisbon earthquake, for instance, the wave of disturbance came from this volcanic region in the Western seas. And it has been held by some of our ablest vulcanologists that nearly all, if not all, the regions of disturbance in Southern Europe communicate with the region under the Atlantic.

The earliest British earthquake of which any record has reached us is that which, according to Wendover, shook the whole of England in 974. Probably in those days a few scattered reports of earththrees from places tolerably far apart would do duty as evidence of an earthquake shaking all England. Assuredly Wendover had not satisfactory evidence from all parts of England; and from what we know of later earthquakes it is probable that that of 974 was limited to a much smaller region than Wendover's account would seem to suggest.

In the earthquake of 1081, a heavy bellowing, according to one chronicler, was heard throughout the length and breadth of England, and in like manner the accounts of the earthquake of 1089 indicate, with similar want of precision—most probably—a disturbance affecting the whole country—‘a mickle earth-stirring’ over all England. The unscientific observers of the day attributed the late harvest of that year to the earthquake.

A severe earthquake was felt in the Western and Midland parts of England in 1110. The valley of the River Trent must have been very violently shaken, for the river was dried up at Nottingham, and so remained, according to the chronicler, 'from morning to the third hour of the day, insomuch that menne walked dryeshodde' through its channel. This shock may probably have been due to a remote disturbance of great violence, for it has been observed that when this country has been slightly shaken by the effects of a distant earthshock the waters in our rivers and lakes have often shown the most marked effects of the disturbance.

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were remarkably prolific in great earthquakes in the British Isles. Passing over the widely felt earthquake of 1133, there was an earthquake of great violence in 1165. It was felt in the Eastern counties, and apparently belonged to the same set of earthquakes as that which was felt so sharply last April in Essex. Matthew Paris tells us that in Ely, Norfolk, and Suffolk this earthquake threw men to the ground and rang the bells. It does not seem to have fully relieved the pent-up forces beneath the Eastern counties, for only twenty years later there occurred an earthquake in which old Lincoln Cathedral was thrown down, and much destruction wrought in Lincolnshire and neighbouring counties. Two years later another violent earthquake was experienced in the eastern parts of England and many strong buildings were thrown down. It seems likely that during the next ten or twenty years we may have similar evidence that a single earthquake is insufficient to relieve the eastern earthquake region of England.

In the years 1247 and 1248 two remarkable earthquakes occurred, one in the east, the other in the west of England, as though a mighty subterranean oscillation had slowly taken place, throwing the line of disturbance over from east to west. In the former year, according to Matthew Paris, many buildings on the banks of the Thames were flung to the ground. He adds that 'a few days after the sea became unnaturally calm, as if the tides had ceased, and so remained for about three months.' But it is very unlikely that the earthquake had anything to do with this oceanic anomaly. In the western earthquake of 1248 the destruction wrought was greater than in any modern British earthquake. The Cathedral of St. David's was partially destroyed; a part of the tower of Wells Cathedral was flung down and fell through the roof; several churches in Somerset-

shire were seriously damaged, wide rents being apparent in the walls.

But the earthquake of September 1275 was still more destructive. We are told by Matthew of Westminster that the church of Saint Michael of the Hill, outside Glastonbury, was levelled to the ground by the violence of this earthquake. Many other large churches were destroyed or greatly injured.

Those who recognise or imagine a connection between the earthquakes in Great Britain and the movements occurring within the volcanic region of Southern Europe, remark that during all the time that England was thus disturbed, the region of which Vesuvius is the principal outlet had been quiescent. It is perhaps rather convenient for the theory of connection between British earthquakes and the Vesuvian volcanic region, that we may recognise evidence in favour of the theory, whether disturbance in one region synchronises with disturbances in the other, or, on the other hand, with a time when the other region is unusually quiescent. Yet it must be admitted that even the apparently contradictory forms of evidence derived from the quiescence of Vesuvius and its fellow craters on the one hand, or their unusual activity on the other, when British earthquakes occur with exceptional violence, may in reality point in the same direction. For on the smaller scale it certainly has been observed that within the Vesuvian region itself, at a time when Vesuvius is at rest, the minor craters of this region are often found to be unusually active, while yet at times, when Vesuvius is in violent eruption, these same volcanoes seem exceptionally active too. It is as though when Vesuvius rests they tried to do the work which Vesuvius is neglecting, while, when Vesuvius is very active, they try to help the great crater by sharing in its labours. It may, therefore, quite possibly be the case that distant volcanic regions may show their kinship as much by alternating throes as by simultaneous disturbances.

Be this as it may, a period of more than a century elapsed after the earthquake of 1275, during which no disturbance of any marked character affected the British Isles.

It was not till the year 1382 that England was again seriously shaken by an earthquake. In that year several churches were thrown to the ground in the south-east of England. That earthquake appears to have belonged to the same class as the disturbance experienced last April, and it is worthy of notice that, though more than two hundred earthquakes have occurred since

1382, there have been but two (those of 1580 and 1692) in which serious damage has been done in the five centuries. There is a tradition, however, though based on more than doubtful evidence, that in the fifteenth century Lyme Regis was nearly destroyed by an earthquake.

On the evening of Easter Monday, 1580, an earthquake of great violence was felt in London. We are told that the people rushed from the theatres in terror, and that the Templars, who were at supper, were so terrified that they ran out of the hall with their knives in their hands. Part of the Temple Church was flung down, and at Christ Church two apprentices were killed. Old St. Paul's Cathedral was slightly injured, some stones being cast down from the tower. So much alarm was occasioned by this earthquake that a special form of prayer was prepared, which, with the Report of the Earthquake, will be found in 'Clay's Elizabethan Liturgies.'

The earthquake of September 8, 1692, was also felt in London, the merchants being driven from 'Change, and the people rushing forth from their houses into the streets.

In 1750 a series of slight shocks caused no slight anxiety, of which certain quacks took advantage by vending pills as 'good against the earthquake.'

The great earthquake of 1755, by which Lisbon was destroyed, was felt in many parts of England. The waters of the fish pond at Peerless Pool, in the City Road, were agitated. At Barlborough, in Derbyshire, a terrible noise was heard on the western side of a large body of water, called Pibley Dam; 'then a great swelling wave of water came in from the south, and rose two feet on the sloped damhead at the north end of the water. The wave subsided, but presently returned again, and the agitation continued, with gradually decreasing violence, for three-quarters of an hour.' Still stranger were the effects noticed at Busbridge, in Surrey. There was a canal there about 700 feet long and 60 feet broad. At the eastern end of this canal the water, soon after 9 A.M., was observed to be in a great state of turmoil and agitation. 'The surface, instead of being level, was seen to be ridged like the roof of a house, only rounded at the top. This ridge extended lengthwise about thirty yards, and stood about three feet above the usual level of the water. After oscillating for a few moments this heaped-up water swept suddenly towards the northern bank of the canal, and poured over the grass walk on that side. It then returned, and swept with still greater force over the grass walk

along the southern side of the bank. It was noticed that the bottom of the canal was left dry for several feet when the water swept towards the south. The flux and reflux of the water in the canal continued for upwards of a quarter of an hour, during which the sand of the bottom was thrown up and thoroughly mixed with the water, which continued turbid long after the disturbance had ceased.' It is added, that during the whole time of the disturbance a noise was heard as though a mighty stream beneath the ground were turning a gigantic mill.

Similar effects were noted in the water of the moat encompassing Shireburn Castle, in Oxfordshire. Though the morning was calm, and the water of the moat had been as smooth as a looking-glass, one corner of the moat became suddenly disturbed in a surprising manner. 'While all the rest of the water maintained its smoothness unchanged, this part began to flow backwards and forwards in a surprising manner. The flux and reflux were observed to be quite regular. Each flow of water began gently, then its violence increased by degrees, and at last it rushed in upon the shore with a wonderful impetuosity.'

In Scotland the effects of the great earthquake were felt in still more remarkable degree. A boat on Loch Lomond was actually carried forty yards inland by a great wave which was suddenly formed on the surface of the lake. But the consideration of earth-shakings in Scotland does not fall within the subject with which I am here dealing. It is noteworthy, however, that for more than a century after the great earthquake of Lisbon in 1755 all the most remarkable earth-shakings experienced in Great Britain disturbed Scotland much more than England or Wales. Perthshire has been more disturbed, on the whole, than any part of Scotland. Indeed, there is a region near Comrie which is almost always in a state of oscillation, and has at times been very violently disturbed. (In the winter of 1789 the ice on a lake near Comrie was shivered into small fragments by a sudden earthquake.)

In the year 1863, after some occasional but very slight premonitory symptoms, the western earthquake region was disturbed afresh. The centre of disturbance was in the neighbourhood of Ross and Abergavenny; but the valleys of the Dore, the Wye, and tributary rivers were violently shaken. The Rev. T. W. Webb, author of '*Celestial Objects for Common Telescopes*,' gives a graphic account of this earthquake as felt in the parish of Hardwick, near the upper end of the Golden Valley and the town of

Hay. 'One cottager,' he says, 'compared its approach to the sound of a carriage rolling over boards.' 'Feeling a great interest in such phenomena,' he proceeds, 'and never having witnessed one, I thought myself very unfortunate on the occasion. During the first half of the night I had been examining nebulæ and other faint objects with my $5\frac{1}{2}$ -inch object-glass, and with some success. . . . The increase of moonlight, however, and cold, induced me to discontinue my employment a short time—perhaps three-quarters of an hour—before the arrival of the shock, which I should otherwise have had such an admirable opportunity of observing.' Considering that the closing of a door will often sufficiently shake a telescope, though mounted on an independent piece of masonry, to send a star clean out of the field of view, it may well be believed that Mr. Webb would have found the objects he was observing disturbed in the field before the shock had been fairly felt in any other way; and it is possible that the quality of the advancing earth-tremors would have been discernible in the character of the movements executed by a star in the optical field.

As it was, however, Mr. Webb was partially roused from his first sleep by a concussion, which rattled violently the doors of a locked wardrobe, and probably the pictures on the walls, 'but passed away,' he says, 'leaving me too drowsy to think of anything more than a furious gust of wind, which I had forgotten on awaking next morning. The servants, however,' he proceeds, 'felt their beds lifted up. The only remaining evidence in my house was the throwing on the ground of a small unframed picture that stood upright against a wall; but the chimney of an old cottage about a mile distant was believed to have been cracked at that time.' The earthquake was felt more violently elsewhere. A policeman in Cheltenham stated that he saw the undulations of the houses in the moonlight, and was obliged to steady himself by holding a lamp-post; though doubtless he unconsciously attributed to the houses the movement which really disturbed (chiefly) the pavement on which he stood. When Pip, in 'Great Expectations,' was tilted backwards over the tombstone by Mr. Magwitch, the church steeple seemed to turn a somersault over its own weathercock; but the phenomenon was subjective only. In the same way, doubtless, must be explained part of what was seen by a labouring man of Pendock, according to the Rev. W. S. Symonds, rector of that parish. 'A man rose unusually early,' he says, 'and was engaged loading a cart with potatoes, which he had pro-

mised to deliver before his day's work commenced, when, on a sudden, he heard a dreadful noise come roaring up,' apparently from a wood to the westward, and his cart rocked so violently that he was nearly thrown out of it. *The trees all around him rocked violently to and fro*, and the rooks rose cawing from the wood; the small birds twittered, and took wing with notes of distress. The thunderlike noise appeared to roll off towards the east.

The disturbance must have been violent—at least for an English earthquake—for the waters round the shores of South Wales were much moved. Eight hours after the shock had been felt in Herefordshire a large column of water, shaped somewhat like a cone, and 'of a dark brown colour, as if charged with earthy matter,' rolled into Carmarthen Bay. This cone of water, coming into contact with a small vessel in the bay, rushed over her decks, and for a time she continued to be violently pitched about.

The earthquake of 1868 affected the same western region, but was much slighter even than that of 1863. No buildings were injured, nothing even was thrown down. Here and there a few cases of rocking were noticed, but they were very slight.

It was noteworthy, however, that the disturbance of 1868 occurred at a rather singular time in connection with an eruption of Vesuvius which was then in progress. Vesuvius had been in violent eruption. It suddenly ceased, and for a few days the mountain seemed quite at rest. The day after Vesuvius thus ceased its throes there was an earthquake in Ireland. Presently Vesuvius was more violently disturbed than ever. But before this fresh outburst, as though the imprisoned earth-forces were seeking outlet elsewhere, an earthquake occurred in Wallachia, and another in England. It seems at least highly probable that the tremors experienced in Ireland, England, and Wallachia, were due to the action of subterranean energies unable to act for awhile through the Neapolitan crater.

The earthquake of April 22, 1884, belonged to the eastern series, and affected chiefly the northern half of the eastern earthquake district. The centre of disturbance would seem to have been a few miles south of Colchester, close to the sea coast. The shock was felt, however, as far west as Wolverhampton and Bristol, as far south as Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings, and Boulogne, as far north as Spilsby in Lincolnshire, and throughout Norfolk, even to the shore. The shock was most severely felt in Essex, and next after Essex in this respect came Suffolk and North Kent. The

influence of the character of the rock surface in different parts of the region affected by the earthquake is not altogether clear. But the evidence tends to show that where the Palæozoic rocks come near to the surface the shock was clearly felt, whereas where a tolerably thick layer of Secondary and Tertiary rock separates the hard ancient rock from the surface, the shock was much less marked. It has been suggested that the double shock recorded in some cases may be due to the different velocities with which the disturbance travelled through the hard ancient rocks and the softer overlying strata.

Nothing connecting the disturbance with minor details of geological structure, such as lines of fault, was observed. 'The only instance,' says Mr. Topley, on this subject, was 'at St. John's, near Greenwich, where the shock was felt very close to a fault, well exposed in the railway cutting just west of St. John's Station. But,' he adds, 'another and perhaps a better explanation is this, that the shock was there felt by an invalid lying quietly in bed, and very sensitive to movement.' There is supposed to be an 'earthquake line' running from south-west to north-east, and passing a few miles north of Chelmsford and Colchester; but there is no evidence of any marked effects along that line. There is another supposed earthquake line in Sussex, running from Chichester by Petworth and along the north side of the Downs, round to Eastbourne. A Lewes clergyman wrote in 1879 as follows respecting this line, which fell well within the range of the April earthquake: 'I have learned that there is in Sussex an earthquake line which is well known; Chichester stands on it, and has been a good deal shaken at times; and possibly the fall of the spire of our cathedral some sixteen years ago may have been hastened by the successive shocks of three centuries. About fifteen years ago' (he seems to have referred to the earthquake of 1863, though it was one of the western series, and had not been much felt in Sussex) 'we had a great "shaking" here; and I have myself felt slightly perceptible shocks perhaps five or six times since. Others have felt the same, but the shocks have not been serious enough to alarm us.' Nothing special, however, was noted along this particular earthquake line last April. Probably the seat of disturbance lay too far below the layers usually affected along the line.

The effect of the recent earthquake on springs and wells in the disturbed region was remarkable. At Colchester it was proved by careful measurement that the level of the water had risen

seven feet in the wells! At Bocking the rise was noteworthy, though not quite so remarkable, amounting to about two and a quarter feet. At East Mersea water spouted from the ground. Mallet, speaking of such phenomena, says, 'Fissures containing water often spout it up at the moment of shock. Wells, after the shock, alter their water-level, and sometimes the nature of their contents; springs become altered in the volume of water they deliver. . . . It is important to observe whether any changes of level of water in wells take place *prior* to earthquakes. Statements to this effect have frequently been made, but as yet stand much in need of confirmation.'

The behaviour of these waters under the earth is in many respects worth careful inquiry. If we consider how considerable a portion of each year's rainfall finds its way beneath the surface, and how, consequently, the pressures there existing must be increased and also vary in their relative action (according as the rainfall varies in different regions), we cannot but recognise in rainfall a cause of subterranean disturbance, though the disturbance caused in this particular way may be but slight. That the effects of subterranean disturbance on wells and springs should at times be remarkable we can very readily understand. One would suppose the average effect would be to lower the water in springs and wells, seeing that if any crack or fissure is formed through which the water can find an outlet, the level would naturally sink. But it is easy to understand how it is that the reverse happens in many cases, perhaps in most. An earthquake may be regarded as in almost every case a process of terrestrial contraction. Cavities beneath the earth's surface are made smaller, or closed in altogether, by the yielding of the crust under the action of gravity. Naturally then, the water, having less room, rises to a higher level, just as the fluid in a pewter pot would rise higher if the lower part of the vessel were compressed.

We may hence infer that every earthquake indicates the continuance of the process of contraction which every orb in space undergoes till it has reached its final condition. The great orb of the sun is contracting, and the work of contraction generates the light and heat which the sun pours out so generously on the solar system, and, as it seems to us (doubtless because of our limited knowledge), so wastefully into interstellar space. The giant planets must also be contracting, the proof lying in the signs of intense activity which the astronomer recognises in these sun-like orbs. Our earth, and her fellow planets of the terrestrial

sort, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, undergo slower processes of contraction, but still processes effective enough to generate at times intense heat, and lead to the eruption of mighty volcanoes, casting forth masses of glowing lava, or hurling to enormous heights vast volumes of heated gas, bearing along dust and scoriæ. Even the moon, dead though she seems, has not yet quite completed, I conceive, the process of contraction, though external evidence of disturbances thus caused may very seldom be discerned.

Earthquakes such as that of April 22 show that even those parts of the earth's crust where the process of contraction has little left to do are still at work, drawing gradually inwards towards the centre, imperceptibly most of the time, but occasionally with abrupt action, making itself felt distinctly through the layers of rock which separate the surface from the region where the disturbance has really taken place. All such movements tell us in truth that as yet the earth beneath us is not dead, though at times it sleepeth.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

A Blue Grass Penelope.

CHAPTER III.

MR. PATTERSON did not inform his wife of the lawyer's personal threat to himself. But he managed, after Poindexter had left, to make her conscious that Mrs. Tucker might be a power to be placated and feared. 'You've shot off your mouth at her,' he said argumentatively, 'and whether you've hit the mark or not you've had your say. Ef you think it's worth a possible five thousand dollars and interest to keep on, heave ahead. Ef you rather have the chance of getting the rest in cash, you'll let up on her.' 'You don't suppose,' returned Mrs. Patterson contemptuously, 'that she's got anything but what that man of hers—Poindexter—lets her have?' 'The Sheriff says,' retorted Patterson surlily, 'that she's notified him that she claims the *rancho* as a gift from her husband three years ago—and she's in *possession* now, and was so when the execution was out. It don't make no matter,' he added, with gloomy philosophy, 'who's got a full hand as long as *we* ain't got the cards to chip in. I wouldn't 'a minded it,' he continued meditatively, 'ef Spence Tucker had dropped a hint to me afore he put out.' 'And I suppose,' said Mrs. Patterson angrily, 'you'd have put out too?' 'I reckon,' said Patterson simply.

Twice or thrice during the evening he referred, more or less directly, to this lack of confidence shown by his late debtor and employer, and seemed to feel it more keenly than the loss of property. He confided his sentiments quite openly to the Sheriff in possession, over the whisky and euchre with which these gentlemen avoided the difficulties of their delicate relations. He brooded over it as he handed the keys of the shop to the Sheriff when they parted for the night, and was still thinking of it when the house was closed, everybody gone to bed, and he was fetching a fresh jug of water from the well. The moon was at times obscured by flying clouds—the *avant-couriers* of the regular evening shower. He was stooping over the well, when he

sprang suddenly to his feet again. 'Who's there?' he demanded sharply.

'Hush!' said a voice so low and faint it might have been a whisper of the wind in the palisades of the corral. But, indistinct as it was, it was the voice of the man he was thinking of as far away, and it sent a thrill of alternate awe and pleasure through his pulses.

He glanced quickly around. The moon was hidden by a passing cloud, and only the faint outlines of the house he had just quitted were visible. 'Is that you, Spence?' he said tremulously.

'Yes,' replied the voice, and a figure dimly emerged from the corner of the corral.

'Lay low, lay low—for God's sake,' said Patterson, hurriedly throwing himself upon the apparition. 'The Sheriff and his *posse* are in there.'

'But I must speak to you a moment,' said the figure.

'Wait,' said Patterson, glancing towards the building. Its blank, shutterless windows revealed no inner light—a profound silence encompassed it. 'Come quick,' he whispered. Letting his grasp slip down to the unresisting hand of the stranger, he half dragged, half led him, brushing against the wall, into the open door of the deserted bar-room he had just quitted, locked the inner door, poured a glass of whisky from a decanter, gave it to him, and then watched him drain it at a single draught. The moon came out, and falling through the bare windows full upon the stranger's face, revealed the artistic but slightly dishevelled curls and moustache of the fugitive, Spencer Tucker.

Whatever may have been the real influence of this unfortunate man upon his fellows, it seemed to find expression in a singular unanimity of criticism. Patterson looked at him with a half-dismal, half-welcoming smile. 'Well, you are a h—ll of a fellow, ain't you?'

Spencer Tucker passed his hand through his hair and lifted it from his forehead, with a gesture at once emotional and theatrical. 'I am a man with a price on me!' he said bitterly. 'Give me up to the Sheriff, and you'll get five thousand dollars. Help me, and you'll get nothing. That's my — luck, and yours too, I suppose.'

'I reckon you're right there,' said Patterson gloomily. 'But I thought you got clean away. Went off in a ship—'

'Went off in a boat to a ship,' interrupted Tucker savagely;

'went off to a ship that had all my things on board—everything. The cursed boat capsized in a squall just off the Heads. The ship sailed away, the men thinking I was drowned, likely, and that they'd make a good thing off my goods—I reckon.'

'But the girl, Inez, who was with you: didn't she make a row?'

'*Quien sabe?*' returned Tucker, with a reckless laugh. 'Well, I hung on like grim death to that boat's keel until one of those Chinese fishermen, in a "dug-out," hauled me in opposite Sancelito. I chartered him and his dug-out to bring me down here.'

'Why here?' asked Patterson, with a certain ostentatious caution that ill-concealed his pensive satisfaction.

'You may well ask,' returned Tucker, with an equal ostentation of bitterness, as he slightly waved his companion away. 'But I reckoned I could trust a white man that I'd been kind to, and who wouldn't go back on me. No, no, let me go! Hand me over to the Sheriff!'

Patterson had suddenly grasped both the hands of the picturesque scamp before him, with an affection that for an instant almost shamed the man who had ruined him. But Tucker's egotism whispered that this affection was only a recognition of his own superiority, and felt flattered. He was beginning to believe that he was really the injured party.

'What I *have* and what I have *had* is yours, Spence,' returned Patterson, with a sad and simple directness that made any further discussion a gratuitous insult. 'I only wanted to know what you reckoned to do here.'

'I want to get over across the coast range to Monterey,' said Tucker. 'Once there, one of those coasting schooners will bring me down to Acapulco, where the ship will put in.'

Patterson remained silent for a moment. 'There's a mustang in the corral you can take—leastways, I shan't know that it's gone—until to-morrow afternoon. In an hour from now,' he added, looking from the window, 'these clouds will settle down to business. It will rain; there will be light enough for you to find your way by the regular trail over the mountain, but not enough for any one to know you. If you can't push through to-night, you can lie over at the Posada on the summit. Them Greasers that keep it won't know you, and if they did they won't go back on you. And if they did go back on you nobody would believe them. It's mighty curious,' he added, with gloomy philosophy, 'but I reckon it's the reason why Providence allows this kind of cattle to live among white men and others made in His image.'

Take a piece of pie, won't you?' he continued, abandoning this abstract reflection and producing half a flat pumpkin pie from the bar. Spencer Tucker grasped the pie with one hand and his friend's fingers with the other, and for a few moments was silent from the hurried deglutition of viand and sentiment. 'You're a white man, Patterson, any way,' he resumed. 'I'll take your horse, and put it down in our account, at your own figure. As soon as this cursed thing is blown over, I'll be back here and see you through, you bet. I don't desert my friends, however rough things go with me.'

'I see you don't,' returned Patterson, with an unconscious and serious simplicity that had the effect of the most exquisite irony. 'I was only just saying to the Sheriff that if there was anything I could have done for you, you wouldn't have cut away without letting me know.' Tucker glanced uneasily at Patterson, who continued, 'Ye ain't wanting anything else?' Then observing that his former friend and patron was roughly but newly clothed, and betrayed no trace of his last escapade, he added, 'I see you've got a fresh harness.'

'That — Chinaman bought me these at the landing; they're not much in style or fit,' he continued, trying to get a moonlight view of himself in the mirror behind the bar, 'but that don't matter here.' He filled another glass of spirits, jauntily settled himself back in his chair, and added, 'I don't suppose there are any girls around anyway.'

'Cept your wife; she was down here this afternoon,' said Patterson meditatively.

Mr. Tucker paused with the pie in his hand. 'Ah, yes!' He essayed a reckless laugh, but that evident simulation failed before Patterson's melancholy. With an assumption of falling in with his friend's manner, rather than from any personal anxiety, he continued, 'Well?'

'That man Poindexter was down here with her. Put her in the *hacienda* to hold possession afore the news came out.'

'Impossible!' said Tucker, rising hastily. 'It don't belong—that is——' he hesitated.

'Yer thinking the creditors 'll get it, mebbee,' returned Patterson, gazing at the floor. 'Not as long as she's in it; no sir! Whether it's really hers, or she's only keeping house for Poindexter, she's a fixture, you bet. They're a team when they pull together, they are!'

The smile slowly faded from Tucker's face, that now looked

quite rigid in the moonlight. He put down his glass and walked to the window as Patterson gloomily continued, 'But that's nothing to you. You've got ahead of 'em both, and had your revenge by going off with the gal. That's what I said all along. When folks—specially women folks—wondered how you could leave a woman like your wife, and go off with a scalliwag like that gal, I allers said they'd find out there was a reason. And when your wife came flaunting down here with Poindexter before she'd quite got quit of you, I reckon they began to see the whole little game. No, sir! I knew it wasn't on account of the gal! Why, when you came here to-night and told me quite nat'ral-like and easy how she went off in the ship, and then calmly ate your pie and drank your whisky after it, I knew you didn't care for her. There's my hand, Spence; you're a trump, even if you are a little looney, eh? Why, what's up?'

Shallow and selfish as Tucker was, Patterson's words seemed like a revelation that shocked him as profoundly as it might have shocked a nobler nature. The simple vanity and selfishness that made him unable to conceive any higher reason for his wife's loyalty than his own personal popularity and success, now that he no longer possessed that *éclat* made him equally capable of the lowest suspicions. He was a dishonoured fugitive, broken in fortune and reputation—why should she not desert him? He had been unfaithful to her from wildness, from caprice, from the effect of those fascinating qualities; it seemed to him natural that she should be disloyal from more deliberate motives, and he hugged himself with that belief. Yet there was enough doubt, enough of haunting suspicion that he had lost or alienated a powerful affection to make him thoroughly miserable. He returned his friend's grasp convulsively and buried his face upon his shoulder. But he was not above feeling a certain exultation in the effect of his misery upon the dog-like, unreasoning affection of Patterson, nor could he entirely refrain from slightly posing his affliction before that sympathetic but melancholy man. Suddenly he raised his head, drew back and thrust his hand into his bosom with a theatrical gesture.

'What's to keep me from killing Poindexter in his tracks?' he said wildly.

'Nothen' but *his* shooting first,' returned Patterson, with dismal practicality. 'He's mighty quick, like all them army men. It's about even, I reckon, that he don't get *me* first,' he added in an ominous voice.

'No!' returned Tucker, grasping his hand again. 'This is not your affair, Patterson; leave him to me when I come back.'

'If he ever gets the drop on me, I reckon he won't wait,' continued Patterson lugubriously. 'He seems to object to my passin' criticism on your wife, as if she was a queen or an angel.'

The blood came to Spencer's cheek, and he turned uneasily to the window. 'It's dark enough now for a start,' he said hurriedly, 'and if I could get across the mountain without lying over at the summit, it would be a day gained.'

Patterson arose without a word, filled a flask of spirit, handed it to his friend, and silently led the way through the slowly falling rain and the now settled darkness. The mustang was quickly secured and saddled, a heavy *poncho* afforded Tucker a disguise as well as a protection from the rain. With a few hurried, disconnected words, and an abstracted air, he once more shook his friend's hand and issued cautiously from the corral. When out of earshot from the house he put spurs to the mustang, and dashed into a gallop.

To intersect the mountain road he was obliged to traverse part of the highway his wife had walked that afternoon, and to pass within a mile of the *casa* where she was. Long before he reached that point his eyes were straining the darkness in that direction for some indication of the house which was to him familiar. Becoming now accustomed to the even obscurity, less trying to the vision than the alternate light and shadow of cloud or the full glare of the moonlight, he fancied he could distinguish its low walls over the monotonous level. One of those impulses which had so often taken the place of resolution in his character, suddenly possessed him to diverge from his course and approach the house. Why, he could not have explained. It was not from any feeling of jealous suspicion or contemplated revenge—that had passed with the presence of Patterson; it was not from any vague lingering sentiment for the woman had wronged—he would have shrunk from meeting her at that moment. But it was full of these and more possibilities by which he might or might not be guided, and was at least a movement towards some vague end, and a distraction from certain thoughts he dared not entertain and could not entirely dismiss. Inconceivable and inexplicable to human reason, it might have been acceptable to the Divine omniscience for its predestined result.

He left the road at a point where the marsh encroached upon the meadow, familiar to him already as near the spot where he had

debarked from the Chinaman's boat the day before. He remembered that the walls of the *hacienda* were distinctly visible from the *tules* where he had hidden all day, and he now knew that the figures he had observed near the building, which had deterred his first attempts at landing, must have been his wife and his friend. He knew that a long tongue of the slough filled by the rising tide followed the marsh, and lay between him and the *hacienda*. The sinking of his horse's hoofs in the spongy soil determined its proximity, and he made a *détour* to the right to avoid it. In doing so, a light suddenly rose above the distant horizon ahead of him, trembled faintly, and then burned with a steady lustre. It was a light at the *hacienda*. Guiding his horse half abstractedly in this direction, his progress was presently checked by the splashing of the animal's hoofs in the water. But the turf below was firm, and a salt drop that had spattered to his lips told him that it was only the encroaching of the tide in the meadow. With his eyes on the light, he again urged his horse forward. The rain lulled, the clouds began to break, the landscape alternately lightened and grew dark; the outlines of the crumbling *hacienda* walls that enshrined the light grew more visible. A strange and dreamy resemblance to the long blue grass plain before his wife's paternal house, as seen by him during his evening rides to courtship, pressed itself upon him. He remembered, too, that she used to put a light in the window to indicate her presence. Following this retrospect, the moon came boldly out, sparkled upon the overflow of silver at his feet, seemed to show the dark, opaque meadow beyond for a moment, and then disappeared. It was dark now, but the lesser earthly star still shone before him as a guide, and pushing towards it, he passed in the all-embracing shadow.

CHAPTER IV.

As Mrs. Tucker, erect, white, and rigid, drove away from the *tienda*, it seemed to her to sink again into the monotonous plain, with all its horrible realities. Except that there was now a new and heart-breaking significance in the solitude and loneliness of the landscape, all that had passed might have been a dream. But as the blood came back to her cheek, and little by little her tingling consciousness returned, it seemed as if her life had been the dream, and this last scene the awakening reality. With eyes smarting with the moisture of shame, the scarlet blood at times

dyeing her very neck and temples, she muffled her lowered crest in her shawl and bent over the reins. Bit by bit she recalled, in Poindexter's mysterious caution and strange allusions, the corroboration of her husband's shame and her own disgrace. This was why she was brought hither—the deserted wife, the abandoned confederate! The mocking glitter of the concave vault above her, scoured by the incessant wind, the cold stare of the shining pools beyond, the hard outlines of the coast range, and the jarring accompaniment of her horse's hoofs and rattling buggy wheels alternately goaded and distracted her. She found herself repeating 'No! no! no!' with the dogged reiteration of fever. She scarcely knew when or how she reached the *hacienda*. She was only conscious that as she entered the *patio* the dusty solitude that had before filled her with unrest now came to her like balm. A benumbing peace seemed to fall from the crumbling walls—the peace of utter seclusion, isolation, oblivion, death! Nevertheless, an hour later, when the jingle of spurs and bridle were again heard in the road, she started to her feet with bent brows and a kindling eye, and confronted Captain Poindexter in the corridor.

'I would not have intruded upon you so soon again,' he said gravely, 'but I thought I might perhaps spare you a repetition of the scene of this morning. Hear me out, please,' he added, with a gentle, half-deprecating gesture, as she lifted the beautiful scorn of her eyes to his. 'I have just heard that your neighbour, Don José Santierra, of Los Gatos, is on his way to this house. He once claimed this land and hated your husband, who bought of the rival claimant, whose grant was confirmed. I tell you this,' he added, slightly flushing as Mrs. Tucker turned impatiently away, 'only to show you that legally he has no rights, and you need not see him unless you choose. I could not stop his coming without perhaps doing you more harm than good; but when he does come, my presence under this roof as your legal counsel will enable you to refer him to me.' He stopped. She was pacing the corridor with short, impatient steps, her arms dropped and her hands clasped rigidly before her. 'Have I your permission to stay?'

She suddenly stopped in her walk, approached him rapidly, and fixing her eyes on his, said,—

'Do I know *all* now—everything?'

He could only reply that she had not yet told him *what* she had heard.

'Well,' she said scornfully, 'that my husband has been cruelly

imposed upon—imposed upon by some wretched woman, who has made him sacrifice his property, his friends, his honour—everything but me?’

‘Everything but whom?’ gasped Poindexter.

‘But ME!’

Poindexter gazed at the sky, the air, the deserted corridor, the stones of the *patio* itself, and then at the inexplicable woman before him. Then he said gravely, ‘I think you know everything.’

‘Then if my husband has left me all he could—this property,’ she went on rapidly, twisting her handkerchief between her fingers, ‘I can do with it what I like, can’t I?’

‘You certainly can.’

‘Then sell it,’ she said, with passionate vehemence. ‘Sell it—all! everything! And sell these.’ She darted into her bedroom, and returned with the diamond rings she had torn from her fingers and ears when she entered the house. ‘Sell them for anything they’ll bring—only sell them at once.’

‘But for what?’ asked Poindexter, with demure lips but twinkling eyes.

‘To pay the debts that this—this—woman has led him into; to return the money she has stolen!’ she went on rapidly, ‘to keep him from sharing her infamy! Can’t you understand?’

‘But, my dear madam,’ began Poindexter, ‘even if this could be done—’

‘Don’t tell me “if it could”—it *must* be done. Do you think I could sleep under this roof, propped up by the timbers of that ruined *tienda*? Do you think I could wear those diamonds again, while that termagant shopwoman can say that her money bought them? No. If you are my husband’s friend you will do this—for—for—his sake.’ She stopped, locked and interlocked her cold fingers before her, and said hesitating and mechanically, ‘You meant well, Captain Poindexter, in bringing me here, I know! You must not think that I blame you for it—or for the miserable result of it that you have just witnessed. But if I have gained anything by it, for God’s sake let me reap it quickly, that I may give it to these people and go! I have a friend who can aid me to get to my husband or to my home in Kentucky, where Spencer will yet find me, I know. I want nothing more.’ She stopped again. With another woman the pause would have been one of tears. But she kept her head above the flood that filled

her heart, and the clear eyes fixed upon Poindexter, albeit pained, were undimmed.

'But this would require time,' said Poindexter, with a smile of compassionate explanation; 'you could not sell now—nobody would buy. You are safe to hold this property while you are in actual possession, but you are not strong enough to guarantee it to another. There may still be litigation; your husband has other creditors than these people you have talked with. But while nobody could oust you—the wife who would have the sympathies of judge and jury—it might be a different case with any one who derived title from you. Any purchaser would know that you could not sell, or if you did, it would be at a ridiculous sacrifice.'

She listened to him abstractedly, walked to the end of the corridor, returned, and without looking up, said,—

'I suppose you know her?'

'I beg your pardon?'

'This woman. You have seen her?'

'Never, to my knowledge.'

'And you are his friend! That's strange.' She raised her eyes to his. 'Well,' she continued impatiently, 'who is she? and what is she? You know that surely?'

'I know no more of her than what I have said,' said Poindexter. 'She is a notorious woman.'

The swift colour came to Mrs. Tucker's face as if the epithet had been applied to herself. 'I suppose,' she said in a dry voice, as if she were asking a business question, but with an eye that showed her rising anger—'I suppose there is some law by which creatures of this kind can be followed and brought to justice—some law that would keep innocent people from suffering for their crimes?'

'I am afraid,' said Poindexter, 'that arresting her would hardly help these people over in the *tienda*.'

'I am not speaking of them,' responded Mrs. Tucker, with a sudden sublime contempt for the people whose cause she had espoused; 'I am talking of my husband.'

Poindexter bit his lip. 'You'd hardly think of bringing back the strongest witness against him,' he said bluntly.

Mrs. Tucker dropped her eyes and was silent. A sudden shame suffused Poindexter's cheek; he felt as if he had struck that woman a blow. 'I beg your pardon,' he said hastily, 'I am talking like a lawyer to a lawyer. He would have taken any other woman by the hand in the honest fulness of his apology, but

something restrained him here. He only looked down gently on her lowered lashes, and repeated his question if he should remain during the coming interview with Don José. 'I must beg you to determine quickly,' he added, 'for I already hear him entering the gate.'

'Stay,' said Mrs. Tucker, as the ringing of spurs and clatter of hoofs came from the corral. 'One moment.' She looked up suddenly, and said, 'How long had he known her?' But before he could reply there was a step in the doorway, and the figure of Don José Santierra emerged from the archway.

He was a man slightly past middle age, fair and well shaven, wearing a black broadcloth *serape*, the deeply embroidered opening of which formed a collar of silver rays around his neck, while a row of silver buttons down the side seams of his riding trousers, and silver spurs completed his singular equipment. Mrs. Tucker's swift feminine glance took in these details as well as the deep salutation, more formal than the exuberant frontier politeness she was accustomed to, with which he greeted her. It was enough to arrest her first impulse to retreat. She hesitated and stopped as Poindexter stepped forward, partly interposing between them, acknowledging Don José's distant recognition of himself with an ironical accession of his usual humorous tolerance. The Spaniard did not seem to notice it, but remained gravely silent before Mrs. Tucker, gazing at her with an expression of intent and unconscious absorption.

'You are quite right, Don José,' said Poindexter, with ironical concern, 'it is Mrs. Tucker. Your eyes do *not* deceive you. She will be glad to do the honours of her house,' he continued, with a simulation of appealing to her, 'unless you visit her on business, when I need not say I shall be only too happy to attend you—as before.'

Don José, with a slight lifting of the eyebrows, allowed himself to become conscious of the lawyer's meaning. 'It is not of business that I come to kiss the Señora's hand to-day,' he replied, with a melancholy softness; 'it is as her neighbour, to put myself at her disposition. Ah! the what have we here for a lady?' he continued, raising his eyes in deprecation of the surroundings; 'a house of nothing, a place of winds and dry bones, without refreshments, or satisfaction, or delicacy. The Señora will not refuse to make us proud this day to send her of that which we have in our poor home at Los Gatos, to make her more complete. Of what shall it be? Let her make choice. Or if she would commemorate

this day by accepting of our hospitality at Los Gatos, until she shall arrange herself the more to receive us here, we shall have too much honour.'

'The Señora would only find it the more difficult to return to this humble roof again, after once leaving it for Don José's hospitality,' said Poindexter, with a demure glance at Mrs. Tucker. But the inuendo seemed to lapse equally unheeded by his fair client and the stranger. Raising her eyes with a certain timid dignity which Don José's presence seemed to have called out, she addressed herself to him.

'You are very kind and considerate, Mister Santierra, and I thank you. I know that my husband'—she let the clear beauty of her translucent eyes rest full on both men—'would thank you too. But I shall not be here long enough to accept your kindness in this house or in your own. I have but one desire and object now. It is to dispose of this property—and indeed all I possess—to pay the debt of my husband. It is in your power, perhaps, to help me. I am told that you wish to possess Los Cuervos,' she went on, equally oblivious of the consciousness that appeared in Don José's face, and a humorous perplexity on the brow of Poindexter. 'If you can arrange it with Mr. Poindexter, you will find me a liberal vendor. That much you can do, and I know you will believe I shall be grateful. You can do no more, unless it be to say to your friends that Mrs. Belle Tucker remains here only for that purpose, and to carry out what she knows to be the wishes of her husband.' She paused, bent her pretty crest, dropped a quaint curtsy to the superior age, the silver braid, and the gentlemanly bearing of Don José, and with the passing sunshine of a smile disappeared from the corridor.

The two men remained silent for a moment, Don José gazing abstractedly on the door through which she had vanished, until Poindexter, with a return of his tolerant smile, said, 'You have heard the views of Mrs. Tucker. You know the situation as well as she does.'

'Ah, yes—possibly better.'

Poindexter darted a quick glance at the grave, fallow face of Don José, but detecting no unusual significance in his manner, continued, 'As you see, she leaves this matter in my hands. Let us talk like business men. Have you any idea of purchasing this property?'

'Of purchasing—ah, no.'

Poindexter bent his brows, but quickly relaxed them with a

smile of humorous forgiveness. 'If you have any other idea, Don José, I ought to warn you, as Mrs. Tucker's lawyer, that she is in legal possession here, and that nothing but her own act can change that position.'

'Ah—so.'

Irritated at the shrug which accompanied this, Poindexter continued haughtily, 'If I am to understand, you have nothing to say—'

'To say—ah, yes, possibly. But'—he glanced toward the door of Mrs. Tucker's room—'not here.' He stopped, appeared to recall himself, and with an apologetic smile, and a studied but graceful gesture of invitation, he motioned to the gateway, and said, 'Will you ride?'

'What can the fellow be up to?' muttered Poindexter, as with an assenting nod he proceeded to remount his horse. 'If he wasn't an old *hidalgo* I'd mistrust him. No matter! here goes!'

The Don also remounted his half-broken mustang; they proceeded in solemn silence through the corral, and side by side emerged on the open plain. Poindexter glanced around; no other being was in sight. It was not until the lonely *hacienda* had also sunk behind them that Don José broke the silence.

'You say just now we shall speak as business men. I say no, Don Marco; I will not. I shall speak—we shall speak—as gentlemen.'

'Go on,' said Poindexter, who was beginning to be amused.

'I say just now I will not purchase the *rancho* from the Señora. And why? Look you, Don Marco;' he reined in his horse, thrust his hand under his *serape*, and drew out a folded document: 'this is why.'

With a smile, Poindexter took the paper from his hand and opened it. But the smile faded from his lips as he read. With blazing eyes he spurred his horse beside the Spaniard, almost unseating him, and said sternly, 'What does this mean?'

'What does it mean?' repeated Don José, with equally flashing eyes, 'I'll tell you. It means that your client, this man Spencer Tucker, is a Judas—a traitor! It means that he gave Los Cuervos to his mistress a year ago, and that she sold it to me—to me, you hear!—me, José Santierra, the day before she left! It means that the *coyote* of a Spencer, the thief, who bought these lands of a thief, and gave them to a thief, has tricked you all. Look,' he said, rising in his saddle, holding the paper like a *bâton*, and de-

fining with a sweep of his arm the whole level plain, 'all these lands were once mine—they are mine again to-day.' Do I want to purchase Los Cuervos? you ask, for you will speak of the *business*. Well, listen. I *have* purchased Los Cuervos, and here is the deed.'

'But it has never been recorded,' said Poindexter, with a carelessness he was far from feeling.

'Of a verity, no. Do you wish that I should record it?' asked Don José, with a return of his simple gravity.

Poindexter bit his lip. 'You said we were to talk like gentlemen,' he returned. 'Do you think you have come into possession of this alleged deed like a gentleman?'

Don José shrugged his shoulders. 'I found it tossed in the lap of a harlot. I bought it for a song. Eh—what would you?'

'Would you sell it again for a song?' asked Poindexter.

'Ah! what is this?' said Don José, lifting his iron-grey brows; 'but a moment ago we would sell everything—for any money. Now we would buy. Is it so?'

'One moment, Don José,' said Poindexter, with a baleful light in his dark eyes. 'Do I understand that you are the ally of Spencer Tucker and his mistress—that you intend to turn this doubly betrayed wife from the only roof she has to cover her?'

'Ah, I comprehend not. You heard her say she wished to go. Perhaps it may please *me* to distribute largess to these cattle yonder, I do not say no. More she does not ask. But *you*, Don Marco, of *whom* are you advocate? You abandon your client's mistress for the wife—is it so?'

'What I may do you will learn hereafter,' said Poindexter, who had regained his composure, suddenly reining up his horse. 'As our paths seem likely to diverge, they had better begin now. Good morning.'

'Patience, my friend, patience! Ah, blessed St. Anthony, what these Americans are! Listen. For what *you* shall do, I do not inquire. The question is to me, what I'—he emphasised the pronoun by tapping himself on the breast—'I, José Santierra, will do. Well, I shall tell you. To-day—nothing. To-morrow—nothing. For a week, for a month—nothing! After, we shall see.'

Poindexter paused thoughtfully. 'Will you give your word, Don José, that you will not press the claim for a month?'

'Truly, on one condition. Observe! I do not ask you for an equal promise—that you will not take this time to defend your-

self.' He shrugged his shoulders. 'No! It is only this. You shall promise that during that time the Señora Tucker shall remain ignorant of this document.'

Poindexter hesitated a moment. 'I promise,' he said at last. 'Good. Adios, Don Marco.'

'Adios, Don José.'

The Spaniard put spurs to his mustang and galloped off in the direction of Los Gatos. The lawyer remained for a moment gazing on his retreating but victorious figure. For the first time the old look of humorous toleration with which Mr. Poindexter was in the habit of regarding all human infirmity gave way to something like bitterness. 'I might have guessed it,' he said, with a slight rise of colour. 'He's an old fool; and she—well, perhaps it's all the better for her!' He glanced backwards almost tenderly in the direction of Los Cuervos, and then turned his head towards the *embarcadero*.

As the afternoon wore on, a creaking, antiquated ox-cart arrived at Los Cuervos, bearing several articles of furniture, and some tasteful ornaments from Los Gatos, at the same time that a young Mexican girl mysteriously appeared in the kitchen, as a temporary assistant to the decrepit Concha. These were both clearly attributable to Don José, whose visit was not so remote but that these delicate attentions might have been already projected before Mrs. Tucker had declined them, and she could not, without marked discourtesy, return them now. She did not wish to seem discourteous; she would like to have been more civil to this old gentleman, who still retained the evidences of a picturesque and decorous past, and a repose so different from the life that was perplexing her. Reflecting that if he bought the estate these things would be ready to his hand, and with a woman's instinct recognising their value in setting off the house to other purchasers' eyes, she took a pleasure in tastefully arranging them, and even found herself speculating how she might have enjoyed them herself had she been able to keep possession of the property. After all, it would not have been so lonely if refined and gentle neighbours, like this old man, would have sympathised with her; she had an instinctive feeling that, in their own hopeless decay and hereditary unfitness for this new civilisation, they would have been more tolerant of her husband's failure than his own kind. She could not believe that Don José really hated her husband for buying of the successful claimant, as there was no other legal title. Allowing herself to become inter-

ested in the guileless gossip of the new handmaiden—proud of her broken English—she was drawn into a sympathy with the grave simplicity of Don José's character—a relic of that true nobility which placed the descendant of the Castilians and the daughter of a free people on the same level.

In this way the second day of her occupancy of Los Cuervos closed, with dumb clouds along the grey horizon, and the paroxysms of hysterical wind growing fainter and fainter outside the walls; with the moon rising after nightfall, and losing itself in silent and mysterious confidences with drifting scud. She went to bed early, but woke past midnight, hearing, as she thought, her own name called. The impression was so strong upon her that she rose, and, hastily enwrapping herself, went to the dark embrasures of the oven-shaped windows, and looked out. The dwarfed oak beside the window was still dropping from a past shower, but the level waste of marsh and meadow beyond seemed to advance and recede with the coming and going of the moon. Again she heard her name called, and this time in accents so strangely familiar that with a slight cry she ran into the corridor, crossed the *patio*, and reached the open gate. The darkness that had, even in this brief interval, again fallen upon the prospect she tried in vain to pierce with eye and voice. A blank silence followed. Then the veil was suddenly withdrawn; the vast plain, stretching from the mountain to the sea, shone as clearly as in the light of day; the moving current of the channel glittered like black pearls, the stagnant pools like molten lead; but not a sign of life nor motion broke the monotony of the broad expanse. She must surely have dreamed it. A chill wind drove her back to the house again; she entered her bedroom, and in half an hour she was in a peaceful sleep.

(To be continued.)

Thackeray and the Theatre.¹

THACKERAY is hardly to be reckoned among dramatists. In his story of 'Lovel the Widower' he protested with mock seriousness that he did not desire to impart a tragic air to that production, 'though that I can write tragedy,' he added, 'plays of mine (of which envious managers never could be got to see the merit) I think will prove when they appear in my posthumous works.' Of course these tragic plays had no real existence; nevertheless, a rebuff or two from the managers he had certainly experienced. After his death there was published his little comedy 'The Wolves and the Lamb,' the foundation and first cause of the novel of 'Lovel the Widower.' This, his only contribution to the literature of the stage, if indeed it may be so ambitiously described, was written presumably about the year 1854; it contains allusions to the Crimean War and to Mrs. Gaskell's fine novel of 'Ruth,' then recently published. 'The Wolves and the Lamb' was offered in turn to Mr. Alfred Wigan and to Mr. Buckstone, the managers of the Olympic and the Haymarket Theatres respectively. It was judged, however, that the play was not very well suited to the stage—the story lacked interest and its tendencies were rather farcical; the *dramatis personæ* offered few opportunities to their representatives; the supply of dialogue was excessive; there was a deficiency of action, &c. Subduing their natural anxiety to print the name of Thackeray upon their programmes, the managers returned the play to its author. He viewed their decision as quite final in the matter, and abandoned all hope of witnessing the production upon the scene of 'The Wolves and the Lamb.' The play has indeed never been represented; it was soon converted to other uses. The first number of the 'Cornhill Magazine,' published in 1860, contained the opening chapters of the novel of 'Lovel the Widower,' into which the comedy of 'The Wolves and the Lamb' had been transformed. The story was supposed to be told by one of the characters, Mr.

¹ This article was written by Mr. Dutton Cook as a companion to his paper on 'Dickens as a Dramatic Critic,' which appeared in this magazine in May 1883. He did not live to see it in type, and Mr. Moy Thomas kindly undertook to correct the proof.—ED.

Batchelor, of Beak Street, who had figured in the play as Captain Touchit. Other of the characters had also undergone a change of name: Mr. Lovel, Lady Baker, Bedford, and Bessy had originally been called Milliken, Lady Kicklebury, Howell, and Julia. Great part of the original dialogue was preserved, but there were many variations of a minor sort. The scene was changed from Richmond to Putney, and a new personage, Mr. Drencher, 'the great, healthy, florid, scarlet-whiskered' medical man, was added to the novel. The stage directions in 'The Wolves and the Lamb' are often curiously explicit. Here, for instance, is the author's careful description of the scene of 'Milliken's villa at Richmond,' where the whole action passes:—'Two drawing-rooms opening into one another. The late Mrs. Milliken's portrait over the mantelpiece; book-cases, writing-tables, piano, newspapers, a handsomely-furnished saloon. The back room opens, with very large windows, on the lawn and pleasure-ground; gate and wall, over which the heads of a cab and carriage are seen as persons arrive. Fruit and a ladder on the walls. A door to the dining-room, another to the sleeping apartments,' &c. Before Captain Touchit enters 'the head of a hansom cab is to be seen over the garden gate;' and presently 'an altercation between cabman and Captain Touchit appears to be going on,' &c. The carrying out of these instructions would have imposed some trouble upon the stage manager of the period and his assistants.

Thackeray was not to succeed as a dramatist; apart from the rejection by the managers of his 'Wolves and the Lamb' he was not permitted, indeed, to run any risks or to encounter any disappointments in connection with the stage. He turned his unacted play into a story; but he did not suffer at the hands of the adapters; he was not required to look on the while his stories were hacked and hewn into plays. It is curious, perhaps, all things considered, that he escaped payment of this price for the great popularity he enjoyed as a novelist; for the fact that his novels were not readily or easily adaptable to the stage would have been no absolute hindrance to the average adapter who had *more suo* made up his mind to adapt. Moreover, his great liking for the theatre, his interest in its transactions, his hearty appreciation of its humours, these are constantly manifest in his works. It was his wont to laugh at the stage, but his laughter was very kindly, and but thinly disguised his love. If he satirised the players he sympathised with them none the less. His books reveal the intimacy of his acquaintance with them and their way

of life. The theatre, indeed, occupies an important place in his writings; and while his literary manner was wholly untheatrical, owned no odour of the stage-lamps, his stories are often found to be rich in dramatic qualities.

He was a constant playgoer. The earlier papers he contributed to a magazine, dealing with his life in Paris when Louis Philippe was king, included an essay upon the French stage of that period, its dramas and melodramas. He pronounced that there were three kinds of drama in France, and that these might be subdivided. There was the old classical drama, well-nigh dead, and full time too . . . ancient French tragedy, red-heeled, patched, and be-periwigged; the fair Rachel was trying to revive this *genre* and to untomb Racine; but, as he held, she could only galvanise the corpse, not revivify it; it was still in its grave, and it was only the ghost and not the body that the fair Jewess had raised. Then there was the comedy of the day, with its gay colonels, smart widows, and silly husbands, of which M. Scribe was the father. 'How that unfortunate seventh commandment has been maltreated by him and his disciples! You will see four pieces at the Gymnase of a night, and, so sure as you see them, four husbands shall be wickedly used. When is this joke to cease?' Finally, there was the drama, that great monster which had sprung into life of late years, of which Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas were the well-known and respectable guardians. The great Hugo's plays invariably contained a monster—a 'delightful monster saved by one virtue.' Triboulet, Lucrèce Borgia, Mary Tudor, Quasimodo, and others. But to the great Dumas half a dozen monsters were necessary, to whom murder was nothing, common intrigue and breakage of the seventh commandment nothing, but who lived and moved 'in a vast delightful complication of crime that could not easily be conceived in England, much less described.' Of the famous Mlle. Georges he wrote: 'When I think over the number of crimes that I have seen her commit I am filled with wonder at her greatness and the greatness of the poets who have conceived such charming horrors for her.' In the 'Tour de Nesle' he had seen her make love to and murder her sons. He had seen her as Lucrèce Borgia poison a company of no less than nine gentlemen at Ferrara, including an affectionate son in the number; he had seen her as Madame de Brinvilliers kill off a number of respectable relations in the first four acts, and at the last he had seen her enter shuddering, ghastly, barefooted, in a white sheet, and actually

burned at the stake! Looking back at the grand dramas which had been produced in Paris during the last half a dozen years, it seemed to him that a man, thinking over all he had seen, the many prodigious crimes by which he had been interested and excited, might well be heartily ashamed of the manner in which he had spent his time and of the hideous kind of mental intoxication in which he had permitted himself to indulge.

In an earlier paper he had discoursed concerning a certain 'Catholic reaction,' as it was called, which was distinguishing French art and literature at that time. He discovered the same Catholic reaction upon the stage. The theatres of the Boulevards had produced a series of quasi-religious plays very edifying to the Parisians, who thus were provided with more Biblical history than had fallen to their share during the whole of their lives before. In the course of a few seasons he had seen produced 'The Wandering Jew,' 'Belshazzar's Feast,' 'Nebuchadnezzar,' 'The Massacre of the Innocents,' 'Joseph and his Brethren,' 'The Passage of the Red Sea,' and 'The Deluge.' Even at the Théâtre Français had been presented Dumas's tragedy of 'Caligula,' which 'brought a vast quantity of religion before the footlights.' The critics had received the play but coldly, had even censured it freely; but the public had applauded. The public, said Dumas, was so much more religious than the critics; it understood him so much better. During four hours, with pious attention, it watched the action of the piece in all its serpentine windings; it listened to the sound of its rolling river of thoughts, new and bold it might be, yet chaste and grave nevertheless. The play could boast no particularly pious origin. As the author confessed, it had been, in the first instance, designed for Franconi's Cirque, for the introduction of a performing steed of many accomplishments, which was to figure as Incitatus, the horse of Caligula. Dumas was busy writing his play when news was brought him: 'Incitatus a reçu d'un de ses camarades un coup de pied qui lui a cassé la cuisse; il a fallu l'abattre.' Franconi had no further need for the play. From an equestrian drama for the Cirque 'Caligula' was converted, therefore, into a poetic tragedy for the Français. Dumas had been anxious that his hero should enter into a car drawn by real horses. But the committee of the Comédie absolutely refused to allow horses to appear upon their stage; the innovation would be destructive of their best traditions; it would be a desecration. 'On m'offrait des femmes,' wrote Dumas. 'J'inventai le chant des Heures et le char de Caligula fut traîné

par des femmes: ce qui était bien autrement moral.' This was in 1837.

Thackeray found that, all things considered, the tragedy of 'Caligula' was a decent tragedy; as decent, that is, as the decent characters of the hero and heroine, Caligula and Messalina, would permit it to be. Caligula was killed at the end of the performance and Messalina was comparatively well-behaved throughout, the more religious qualities of the work being represented by a Christian maiden, one Stella, who, while staying on a visit to her aunt, near Narbonne, had been fortunate enough to be converted to Christianity by no less a person than Mary Magdalene! But Dumas's play of 'Don Juan de Marana' was far in advance of his 'Caligula' in regard to its sacred or profane excesses and eccentricities. The subject was, of course, of Spanish origin; the story dealt with that contest between a good and a bad angel for the possession of an immortal soul which has occupied a good many plays and operas; and the scene was laid, as Thackeray describes, 'in a vast number of places—in heaven (where we have the Virgin Mary, and little angels in blue swinging censers before her!), on earth, under the earth, and in a place still lower but not mentionable to ears polite.' The hero closely resembles his namesake, celebrated by Mozart, Molière, and others, and 'unites the virtues of Lovelace and Lacenaire.' The first act contains half a dozen of murders and intrigues. In the second act Don Juan flogs his elder brother and runs away with his sister-in-law. In the third he fights a duel with a rival and kills him, whereupon the lady-love of his victim takes poison and dies in great agonies upon the stage. In the fourth act Don Juan, having entered a church to carry off a nun, is seized by the statue of one of the ladies he has previously victimised, and made to behold the ghosts of all the unfortunate persons whose deaths he has caused. These apparitions, clothed in white sheets and preceded by wax candles, declare their names and qualities and call in chorus for vengeance upon Don Juan. An angel descends carrying a flaming sword and demands, 'Is there no voice in favour of Don Juan de Marana?' whereupon Don Juan's father quits his coffin to implore pardon for his son; and the nun Don Juan would have scandalously borne away from her convent, who proves indeed to be 'the good spirit of the house of Marana, who has gone to the length of losing her wings and forfeiting her place in heaven in order to keep company with Don Juan on earth, and, if possible, to convert him,' actually flies to the skies to beg the divine per-

mission to remain with him here below. The curtain draws up to the sound of harps, and discovers white-robed angels walking in the clouds, the while the good angel of Marana upon her knees offers up her extraordinary prayer. It is granted, and she descends to earth to love and to go mad and to die for Don Juan! 'The reader,' as Thackeray observes, 'will require no further explanation in order to be satisfied as to the moral of this play; but is it not a very bitter satire upon the country which calls itself the politest nation in the world that the incidents, the indecency, the coarse blasphemy, and the vulgar wit of this piece should find admirers among the public and procure reputation for the author?' Yet the theatrical censorship, which Louis Philippe had restored, found no fault with the morality of 'Don Juan de Marana' and works of its class. 'Here is a man,' writes Thackeray of Dumas, 'who seizes upon saints and angels merely to put sentiments in their mouths which might suit a nymph of Drury Lane. He shows heaven in order that he may carry debauch into it; and avails himself of the most sacred and sublime parts of our creed as a vehicle for a scene-painter's skill or an occasion for a handsome actress to wear a new dress.'

Another admired play at this time was entitled 'Le Maudit des Mers,' which proved to be an early version of the legend of the Flying Dutchman, and may have had its share in producing Wagner's opera, 'Der Fliegende Holländer.' The hero is the familiar Dutch captain who, in the midst of a storm at sea, while his crew were on their knees at prayer, 'blasphemed and drank punch; but what was his astonishment at beholding an archangel, with a sword all covered with flaming resin, who told him that as he in this hour of danger was too daring or too wicked to utter a prayer, he never should cease roaming the seas until he could find some being who would pray to heaven for him!' Once only in a hundred years was the captain allowed to land for this purpose, and the play runs through four centuries in as many acts, setting forth the agonies and the unavailing attempts of the unfortunate Dutchman. In the second act he betrays a Virgin of the Sun to a follower of Pizarro. In the third act he assassinates the heroic William of Nassau. But the angel with the flaming sword reappears to condemn him again to be lonely and tempest-tossed for a hundred years more. 'Treachery,' says the spirit, 'cannot lessen thy punishment; crime will not obtain thy release. *A la mer! à la mer!*' In the fourth act, however, he lands in America to find a crowd of peasants wearing Italian costumes, 'celebrating in a quadrille the victories of Washington.' The

Dutchman is fortunate enough to find a virtuous maiden to pray for him. Forthwith 'the curse is removed, the punishment is over, and a celestial vessel with angels on the decks and sweet little cherubs fluttering about the shrouds and the poop appear to receive him.'

To the critic the drama of Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and the enlightened classes seemed to be profoundly immoral and absurd, the while he found the drama of the common people absurd, it might be, but good and right-hearted too. 'If they borrow a story from the sacred books they garble it without mercy and take sad liberties with the text; but they do not deal in descriptions of the agreeably wicked or ask pity and admiration for tender-hearted criminals and philanthropic murderers as their betters do. Vice is vice on the Boulevards; and it is fine to hear the audience as a tyrant king roars out cruel sentences of death, or a bereaved mother pleads for the life of her child, making their remarks on the circumstances of the scene. "*Ah, le gredin!*" growls an indignant countryman. "*Quel monstre!*" says a grisette in a fury. You see very fat old men crying like babies; and, like babies, sucking enormous sticks of barley-sugar.' The successful melodramas of 'La Duchesse de la Vauballiére' and 'Hermann l'Ivrogne' are cited in proof of the popular morality, the general joy in the discomfiture of vice and the triumph of virtue. Of course the villain of the story was always an aristocrat, a wicked count or a licentious marquis, brought to condign punishment just before the fall of the curtain. 'And too good reason,' adds the critic, 'have the French people had to lay such crimes to the charge of the aristocracy, who are expiating now on the stage the wrongs which they did a hundred years since. The aristocracy is dead now; but the theatre lives upon traditions; and don't let us be too scornful at such simple legends as are handed down by the people from race to race.'

Other plays dealt with English life and character, the intention of the dramatists being occasionally satirical. A little Christmas piece at the Palais Royal parodied the balloon voyage across the Channel of Messrs. Green and Monck Mason, 'and created a good deal of laughter at the expense of John Bull.' Two English noblemen, designated Milor Cricri and Milor Hanneton, were important characters. Dumas' drama of 'Kean, ou Génie et Désordre,' was designed by its author and received by the public 'as a faithful portraiture of English manners.' The absurdities of this work have been often described. In the end Kean goes suddenly mad and so cruelly insults the Prince of

Wales that his Royal Highness determines to transport the tragedian to Botany Bay, a sentence which is afterwards commuted to banishment to New York. In a scene representing the 'Coal Hole Tavern,' called the 'Trou de Charbon' and supposed to be situated upon the banks of the Thames, 'a company of English-women are introduced, and they all wear *pinafiores*, as if the British female,' writes Thackeray, 'were in the invariable habit of wearing this outer garment, or slobbering her gown without it.' An earlier play related the sorrows of Queen Caroline. George the Fourth was made to play a most despicable part, and Signor Bergami fought a duel with Lord Londonderry. In the last act the House of Lords was represented, and Sir Brougham made an eloquent speech on the Queen's behalf. 'Presently the shouts of the mob were heard without; from shouting they proceed to pelting; and pasteboard brickbats and cabbages came flying among the representatives of our hereditary legislature. At this unpleasant juncture, Sir Hardinge, the Secretary at War, rises and calls in the military; the act ends in a general row and the ignominious fall of Lord Liverpool, laid low by a brickbat from the mob.' The Englishman of the French theatre, it was noted, wore almost invariably a red wig, leather gaiters, and 'a long white upper Benjamin.' In a play called 'Le Naufrage de la Méduse,' the deck of an English ship of war was represented, where all the English officers 'appeared in light blue or green coats (the lamplight prevented our distinguishing the colour accurately) and *top boots*!'

In the character of Mr. Charles J. Yellowplush Thackeray reviewed humorously enough, and yet with a severity that was well deserved, the quasi-poetic play of 'The Sea Captain,' which Lord Lytton—then known as Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer—gave to the stage in 1839. It was not only the play that was satirised, however; the dramatist had written an injudicious preface—egotistical, pretentious, and peevish, which rendered him peculiarly liable to criticism. The hostility of certain reviewers he attributed to prejudice against his political opinions. He was professing Liberal principles at this time. On behalf of his play he pleaded that its deficiencies were due in great part to his 'uncertain health and broken spirits,' and he denounced the systematic depreciation and opposition it had been his misfortune to encounter from the general contributors to the periodical press, and avowed that the endeavours made 'to cavil, to distort, to misrepresent, and, in fine, if possible to *run down*,' had occasionally

haunted 'even the hours of composition to check the inspiration and damp the ardour.' Mr. Yellowplush, who pretended to have seen the performance from the gallery of the Haymarket, and to have afterwards, in his pantry, over 'a glass of beer and a cold oyster,' dashed off his article 'on the dresser,' while his friend and fellow-servant, John Thomas Smith, wrote a supplementary review 'across the knife-board,' made very merry over both play and preface. The drollery did not merely consist in that strange system of misspelling which Mr. Yellowplush had adopted, in imitation perhaps of the Winifred Jenkins of Smollett, and which long continued to be a source of amusement to the readers of Thackeray; the footman's criticisms were extremely comical, while they were distinguished by the soundest sense. One example must suffice:—'Take my advise, honrabble sir—listen to a humble footmin,' wrote Mr. Yellowplush; 'it's genrally best in poatry to understand puffickly what you mean yourself and to ingspress your meaning clearly afterwoods—in the simpler words the better praps. You may, for instans, call a coronet a coronal, an "ancestral coronal," if you like, as you might call a hat a "swart sombrero," a "glossy four and nine," a "silken helm to storm impermeable and lightsome as the breezy gossamer"; but in the long run it's as well to call it a hat. It is a hat; and that name is quite as poetticle as another. I think it's Plato or else Harry-stottle, who observes that what we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Confess now, dear Bar'net, don't you long to call it a polyanthus?' Of the drama of 'The Sea Captain' little was heard after its first season until, accorded the new name of 'The Rightful Heir,' it was revived at the Lyceum in 1868. Due attention had been paid to Mr. Yellowplush's criticisms and suggestions; the work had undergone considerable change. No larger measure of success, however, was awarded to 'The Rightful Heir' than twenty years before had been obtained by 'The Sea Captain.'

There are few other examples of Thackeray's appearance as a dramatic critic. 'I like to see children enjoying a pantomime,' he wrote in 'Punch' upon one occasion, signing himself 'Brown the Elder,' and presently, describing himself as 'Mr. Spec,' he related how he had fulfilled a solemn engagement made during the midsummer holidays to go with his young friend Augustus Jones to a Christmas pantomime at Covent Garden Theatre. In those days the pantomime was not the sole entertainment of the evening; the performances commenced with 'one of Mr.

Boyster's comedies of English life.' Mr. Spec could not help remarking 'how like the comedy was to life; how the gentlemen always say "thou" and "prythee" and "go to," and talk about heathen goddesses to each other; how the servants are always their particular intimates; how when there is serious love-making between a gentleman and lady, a comic attachment invariably springs up between the valet and waiting-maid of each; how Lady Grace Gadabout, when she calls upon Rose Ringdove to pay a morning visit, appears in a low satin dress with jewels in her hair; how Saucebox, her attendant, wears diamond brooches and rings on her fingers; while Mrs. Tallyho, on the other hand, transacts all the business of life in a riding habit, and always points her jokes by a cut of the whip.' The comedy opened with a conversation between Frank Nightrake and Bob Fitzoffley, Frank being represented by the light comedian Stupor, attired in a very close-fitting chintz dressing-gown lined with glazed red calico, while Bob was personated by Bulger, 'a meritorious man, but very stout and nearly fifty years of age,' dressed in a rhubarb-coloured body coat with brass buttons, a couple of under-waistcoats, a blue satin stock with a paste brooch in it, and 'an eighteenpenny cane, which he never let out of his hand, and with which he poked fun at everybody.' A close description of the pantomime follows. It was entitled 'Harlequin and the Fairy of the Spangled Pocket-handkerchief; or, the Dream of the Enchanted Nose.' Mr. Spec writes, 'Lives there the man with soul so dead, the being ever so *blasé* and travel-worn, who does not feel some shock and thrill still just at the moment when the bell—the dear and familiar bell of your youth—begins to tinkle and the curtain to rise, and there stand revealed the large shoes and ankles, the flesh-coloured leggings, the crumpled knees, the gorgeous robes and masks finally, of the actors ranged on the stage to shout the opening chorus? All round the house you hear a great gasping a-ha-a from a thousand children's throats. Enjoyment is going to give place to hope; desire is about to be realised. O, you blind little brats! clap your hands and crane over the boxes, and open your eyes with happy wonder. Clap your hands now! In three weeks more the Reverend Doctor Swishtail expects the return of his young friends to Sugarcane House.' In one of the 'Roundabout Papers' of 1861 the author deals again with the subject, and sets forth how he went to two pantomimes with little Bob Miselton—one at the Theatre of Fancy; the other at the Fairy Opera, 'and I don't know which we liked the best,' he adds. At the Fancy

the theme was 'Hamlet'; at the Opera 'William the Conqueror' formed the subject. 'Very few men in the course of nature,' he reflects, 'can expect to see all the pantomimes in one season; but I hope to the end of my life I shall never forego reading about them in that delicious sheet of the "Times" which appears on the morning after Boxing Day. Perhaps reading is even better than seeing. The best way, I think, is to say you are ill, lie in bed, and have the paper for two hours, reading all the way down from Drury Lane to the Britannia at Hoxton.' The initial letter to this 'Roundabout Paper' contains an admirable 'back view' of Thackeray, by the late Frederick Walker.

In 'Vanity Fair' the allusions to the theatre are few. Becky Sharp is the daughter of an 'opera-girl,' and appears on the stage of the Charade Theatre at Gaunt House, where she personates Clytemnestra, and afterwards, as a *ravissante* French marquise, all powder and patches, sings the song of 'The Rose upon my Balcony,' which, by the way, pertained in truth to Sir George Thrum's opera of 'The Brigand's Bride,' and had originally been sung by Morgiana Crump, the wife of Captain Hooker Walker and the heroine of Mr. FitzBoodle's story of 'The Ravenswing.' Mrs. Rawdon Crawley, it is further stated, may have been the Madame Rebéque, whose appearance in the opera of 'La Dame Blanche' at Strasburg in the year 1830 gave occasion to a furious uproar in the theatre there. George Osborne, on the eve of his departure for the Continent to fight Bonaparte, and when he has taken wine enough, goes off half-price to Drury Lane to see Mr. Kean perform Shylock. There is little other reference to the stage in 'Vanity Fair.' But in 'Pendennis' we are introduced to the beautiful Miss Fotheringay and the other members of Mr. Manager Bingley's company performing at the Chatteriss Theatre. Mr. Bows is the first fiddler in the orchestra, and the money is taken at the doors by a slumberous old lady, who is explained by Mr. Foker to be 'Mrs. Dropsicum, Bingley's mother-in-law, great in Lady Macbeth.' Miss Fotheringay's Mrs. Haller is supported by the Countess Wintensen of Mrs. Bingley, the Baron Steinforth of Garbetts, the Tobias of Gott; by Hicks and Miss Thackthwaite, and the Stranger of Bingley, in pantaloons and Hessians, with a large cloak and beaver hat, and a hearse feather 'drooping over his ruddled old face, and only partially concealing his great buckled brown wig.' He wears, too, upon his little finger, which he allows to quiver out of his cloak, a large sham diamond ring, 'covering the first joint of the finger and twiddling in the faces of the pit.'

It had belonged to George Frederick Cooke, who had had it from Mr. Quin, who may have bought it for a shilling! Nevertheless, 'Bingley fancied the world was fascinated by its glitter.' Upon the occasion of her benefit Miss Fotheringay represents Ophelia and Susan in Jerrold's nautical drama. Mr. Hornbull from London was the Hamlet of the night, Bingley modestly contenting himself with the part of Horatio, and reserving his chief strength for William in 'Black-eyed Susan.' Gott was the Admiral and Garbetts the Captain. The artful Major Pendennis would have Miss Fotheringay removed from Chatteriss, and to effect that object brings into action Dolphin the London manager, who figures also, it may be noted, in 'Lovel the Widower' as the employer of Bessy Bellenden in the ballet-girl period of her career. Dolphin comes to Chatteriss, 'a tall and portly gentleman, with a hooked nose and a profusion of curling brown hair and whiskers,' gorgeously dressed with rich under-waistcoats, many splendid rings and pins and chains, and shaking out odours of bergamot from his yellow silk handkerchief. He is of the Jewish nation, if his portrait is to be trusted. Dolphin attends the theatre and witnesses the performance of Cora by Miss Fotheringay, 'uncommonly handsome in white raiment and a leopard's skin, with a sun upon her breast and five tawdry bracelets on her beautiful glancing arms.' It was in vain that Bingley, as Rolla, darted about the stage and yelled like Kean; that Mrs. Bingley, as Elvira presumably, raised her voice and bellowed like a bull of Bashan; that Garbetts and Rowkins and Miss Ronney tried each of them the force of their charms or graces, and acted and swaggered and scowled and spouted their very loudest. Dolphin gave attention only to the efforts of Miss Fotheringay, forthwith offered her an engagement in London, and fairly removed her from the history of Arthur Pendennis. When he next met her she had quitted the stage and become my Lady Mirabel, the wife of Sir Charles, 'an old beau in a star and a blonde wig.'

In 'Esmond' is introduced an interesting picture of the theatre of Queen Anne's time. Harry Esmond accompanies Lord Castlewood and Lord Mohun to the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The play is one of Mr. Wycherley's, 'Love in a Wood.' Mrs. Bracegirdle performs the girl's part in the comedy. She is disguised as a page, and comes and stands before the gentlemen as they sit on the stage. She looks over her shoulder with a pair of arch black eyes and laughs at my Lord Castlewood, and asks what

ails the gentleman from the country, and had he had bad news from Bullock Fair? The fatal duel between Lord Castlewood and Mohun was impending. Between the acts of the play the gentlemen cross the stage and converse freely. There were two of Lord Mohun's party, Captain Macartney in a military habit, and a gentleman in a suit of blue velvet and silver, in a fair periwig with a rich fall of point of Venice lace—my lord the Earl of Warwick and Holland. My lord has a paper of oranges; he offers the fruit to the actresses, joking with them. 'And Mrs. Bracegirdle, when my Lord Mohun said something rude, turned on him, and asked him what he did there, and whether he and his friends had come to stab anybody else as they did poor Will Mountford? My lord's dark face grew darker at this taunt, and wore a mischievous fatal look. They that saw it remembered it and said so afterwards.' The picture is impressive, although one or two of its details may be questioned. Perhaps the play was not 'Love in a Wood,' but some other comedy. The disguise of a page is not worn by any of the ladies in Mr. Wycherley's comedy, and Mrs. Bracegirdle is not known ever to have sustained any part in that work, which was revived at Drury Lane in 1718, the playbills stating that it had not been represented for thirty years. And perhaps in Queen Anne's time the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields had ceased to be called after the Duke of York, who had become James II., and had abdicated his throne. Moreover, Lord Mohun, whose Christian name, by the by, was Charles, and not Henry, appears from his portrait by Kneller to have been a man of fair complexion.

The stage of the early part of George the Third's time is particularly described in 'The Virginians.' The Warringtons and the Lambert family attend the performance of Mr. John Home's famous tragedy of 'Douglas' at Covent Garden Theatre. Mr. Spranger Barry is superb as young Norval, a Highlander in white satin slashed breeches and red boots. The beautiful Mrs. Woffington affects to tears even the Grenadiers on guard upon each side of the stage, according to the custom of the time. Mr. George Warrington reads his tragedy of 'Carpezan' to a select party of gentlemen, including among them the learned Mr. Samuel Johnson, assembled at Mr. Spencer's chambers in Fig-tree Court. Mr. Johnson recollects that he had read at Oxford in Meteranus, in the *Theatrum Universum*, the story of Mr. Warrington's tragedy, which is afterwards produced at Covent Garden Theatre, and obtains great success. 'Mr. Warrington records that the part of

Carpezan was filled by Barry, that Shuter was the old nobleman, that Reddish made an excellent Ulric, and the King of Bohemia was represented by Mr. Geoghagan, or Hagan as he was called on the stage, who looked and played the part to perfection. Mrs. Woffington was thought to look too old for the heroine, but her dying scene greatly affected and delighted the audience. Mr. Rich, the manager, had placed the play upon the stage very elegantly; though there was some doubt whether in the march of Janissaries, in the last act, he had been correct in introducing a favourite elephant which had figured in various pantomimes, and by which one of Mr. Warrington's black servants marched in a Turkish habit. Amidst general applause Mr. Barry announced the play for repetition, and stated it to be the work of a young gentleman of Virginia, his first attempt in the dramatic style.

Mr. Warrington's second attempt was much less fortunate. Although produced at Drury Lane under Mr. Garrick's auspices, and although Mr. Samuel Johnson, wearing a laced waistcoat, and accompanied by his famous friend Mr. Reynolds, countenanced the performance by sitting in the front boxes, the poetic tragedy of 'Pocahontas' was swiftly and surely condemned by the audience. 'One of the causes of failure,' explains the dramatist, 'was my actual fidelity to history.' The characters were most accurately dressed; drawings from pictures in the British Museum were expressly made for the occasion. Mr. Hagan was attired to look like Sir Walter Raleigh, and Miss Pritchard, as Pocahontas, assumed the aspect of a Red Indian. When the heroine rushed into the hero's arms, and a number of spectators were actually in tears, a coarse wag in the pit bawled out, 'Bedad! here's the Belle Savage kissing the Saracen's Head!' and a roar of laughter ensued—'the wretched people,' notes Mr. Warrington, 'not knowing that Pocahontas herself was the very Belle Sauvage from whom the tavern took its name.' The 'pot-house joke' was repeated, however, *ad nauseam*; the English Governor with a long beard was dubbed the 'Goat and Boots'; his lieutenant, whose face happened to be broad, was jeered at as the 'Bull and Mouth,' and so on; the curtain descending amidst a shrill storm of whistles and hisses.

The subject of Mr. Warrington's second tragedy, as the author of 'The Virginians' was no doubt aware, has really served the English theatre, though at a later date than that assigned to the production of 'Pocahontas' under Mr. Garrick's management. At Drury Lane in 1820 there was presented 'a new American drama' in three acts, founded on historical fact, and entitled

'Pocahontas, or the Indian Princess.' The play obtained but three performances. The heroine was personated by Mrs. W. West—a favourite actress of that time wont to appear as Desdemona to Edmund Kean's Othello; Mr. John Cooper represented the hero Captain Smith; and a character bearing the remarkable name of Opechancanough, 'Tributary to Powhatan, the Sachem or Emperor of the Indians,' was assumed by Mr. Junius Brutus Booth. The play was an amended version of an operatic drama by one Barker, entitled 'The Indian Princess, or La Belle Sauvage,' produced at Philadelphia in 1808, the author in his advertisement stating that he had found his materials in the 'General History of Virginia,' written by Captain Smith, and printed in 1624, 'as close an adherence to historic truth having been preserved as dramatic rules would allow of.' When 'Pocahontas' was last heard of she was undergoing the usual fate of poetic heroines—she was figuring on the London stage as the leading character of a 'burlesque extravaganza.'

DUTTON COOK.

Madam.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE events of the night on which Mrs. Trevanion left High-court had at this period of the family story fallen into that softened oblivion which covers the profoundest scars of the heart after a certain passage of time, except sometimes to the chief actor in such scenes, who naturally takes a longer period to forget.

She on whom the blow had fallen at a moment when she was unprepared for it, when a faint sense of security had begun to steal over her in spite of herself, had received it *en plein cœur*, as the French say. We have no word which expresses so well the unexpected, unmitigated shock. She had said to herself, like the captive king in the Bible, that the bitterness of death was past, and had gone, like that poor prince, 'delicately,' with undefended bosom, and heart hushed out of its first alarms to meet her fate. The blow had gone through her very flesh, rending every delicate tissue before she had time to think. It does not even seem a metaphor to say that it broke her heart, or rather cut the tender structure sheer in two, leaving it bleeding, quivering in her bosom. She was not a woman to faint or die at a stroke. She took the torture silently, without being vanquished by it. When nature is strong within us, and the force of life great, there is no pang spared. And while in one sense it was true that for the moment she expected nothing, the instantly following sensation in Madam's mind was that she had known all along what was going to happen to her, and that it had never been but certain that this must come. Even the details of the scene seemed familiar. She had always known that some time or other these men would look at her so, would say just those words to her, and that she would stand and bear it all, a victim appointed from the beginning. In the greater miseries of life it happens often that the catastrophe, however unexpected, bears, when it comes, a familiar air, as of a thing which has been mysteriously rehearsed in our consciousness

all our lives. After the first shock, her mind sprang with a bound to those immediate attempts to find a way of existence on the other side of the impossible, which was the first impulse of the vigorous soul. She said little even to Jane until the dreary afternoon was over, the dinner with its horrible formulas, and she had said what was really her farewell to everything at Highcourt. Then when the time approached for the meeting in the park, she began to prepare for going out with a solemnity which startled her faithful attendant. She took from her desk a sum which she had kept in reserve (who can tell for what possibility?), and dressed herself carefully,—not in her new mourning with all its crape, but in simple black from head to foot. She always had worn a great deal of black lace; it had been her favourite costume always. She enveloped herself in a great veil which would have fallen almost to her feet had it been unfolded, doing everything for herself, seeking the things she wanted in her drawers with a silent diligence which Jane watched with consternation. At last the maid could restrain herself no longer.

‘Am I to do nothing for you?’ she cried with anguish. ‘And oh! where are you going? What are you doing? There’s something more than I thought.’

‘You are to do everything for me, Jane,’ her mistress said, with a pathetic smile. ‘You are to be my sole companion all the rest of my life—unless, if it is not too late, that poor boy.’

‘Madam,’ Jane said, putting her hand to her heart with a natural tragic movement, ‘you are not going to desert—the children? Oh, no! you are not thinking of leaving the children?’

Her mistress put her hands upon Jane’s shoulders, clutching her, and gave vent to a low laugh more terrible than any cry. ‘It is more wonderful than that—more wonderful—more, ah, more ridiculous. Don’t cry. I can’t bear it. They have sent me away. Their father—has sent me away!’

‘Madam!’ Jane’s shriek would have rung through the house had it not been for Madam’s imperative gesture and the hand she placed upon her mouth.

‘Not a word! Not a word! I have not told you before, for I cannot bear a word. It is true, and nothing can be done. Dress yourself now, and put what we want for the night in your bag. I will take nothing. Oh, that is a small matter, a very small matter, to provide all that will be wanted for two poor women. Do you remember, Jane, how we came here?’

'Oh, well, well, Madam. You a beautiful bride, and nothing too much for you, nothing good enough for you.'

'Yes, Jane; but leaving my duty behind me. And now it is repaid.'

'Oh, Madam, Madam! He was too young to know the loss; and it was for his own sake. And besides, if that were all, it's long, long ago, long, long ago.'

Mrs. Trevanion's hands dropped by her side. She turned away with another faint laugh of tragic mockery. 'It is long, long ago; long enough to change everything. Ah, not so long ago but that he remembers it, Jane. And now the time is come when I am free, if I can, to make it up. I have always wondered if the time would ever come when I could try to make it up.'

'Madam, you have never failed to him, except in not having him with you.'

'Except in all that was my duty, Jane. He has known no home, no care, no love. Perhaps now, if it should not be too late——'

And then she resumed her preparations with that concentrated calm of despair which sometimes apes ordinary composure so well as to deceive the lookers-on. Jane could not understand what was her lady's meaning. She followed her about with anxious looks, doing nothing on her own part to aid, paralysed by the extraordinary suggestion. Madam was fully equipped before Jane had stirred, except to follow wistfully every step Mrs. Trevanion took.

'Are you not coming?' she said at length. 'Am I to go alone? For the first time in our lives do you mean to desert me, Jane?'

'Madam,' cried the woman, 'it cannot be—it cannot be! You must be dreaming; we cannot go without the children.' She stood wringing her hands, beyond all capacity of comprehension, thinking her mistress mad or criminal, or under some great delusion—she could not tell which.

Mrs. Trevanion looked at her with strained eyes that were past tears. 'Why,' she said, 'why—did you not say so seventeen years ago, Jane?'

'Oh, Madam,' cried Jane, seizing her mistress by the hands, 'don't do it another time! They are all so young, they want you. It can't do them any good, but only harm, if you go away. Oh, madam, listen to me that loves you. Who have I but you in the world? But don't leave them. Oh, don't we both know the misery it brings? You may be doing it thinking it will make up. But God don't ask these kind of sacrifices,' she cried, the

tears running down her cheeks. 'He don't ask it. He says mind your duty now, whatever's been done in the past. Don't try to be making up for it, the Lord says, Madam; but just do your duty now; it's all that we can do.'

Mrs. Trevanion listened to this address, which was made with streaming eyes and a face quivering with emotion, in silence. She kept her eyes fixed on Jane's face as if the sight of the tears was a refreshment to her parched soul. Her own eyes were dry, with that smile in them which answers at some moments in place of weeping.

'You cut me to the heart,' she said, 'every word. Oh, but I am not offering God any vain sacrifices, thinking to atone. He has taken it into His own hand. Life repeats itself, though we never think so. What I did once for my own will God makes me do over again not of my own will. He has His meaning clear through all, but I don't know what it is, I cannot fathom it.' She said this quickly, with the settled quietness of despair. Then, the lines of her countenance melting, her eyes lit up with a forlorn entreaty, as she touched Jane on the shoulder, and asked, 'Are you coming? You will not let me go alone——'

'Oh, Madam, wherever you go—wherever you go! I have never done anything but follow you. I can neither live nor die without you,' Jane answered, hurriedly; and then, turning away, tied on her bonnet with trembling hands. Madam had done everything else; she had left nothing for Jane to provide. They went out together, no longer alarmed to be seen—two dark figures, hurrying down the great stairs. But the languor that follows excitement had got into the house: there were no watchers about; the whole place seemed deserted. She who that morning had been the mistress of Highcourt, went out of the home of so many years without a soul to mark her going or bid her good-speed. But the anguish of the parting was far too great to leave room for any thought of the details. They stepped out into the night, into the dark, to the sobbing of the wind and the wildly blowing trees. The storm outside gave them a little relief from that which was within.

Madam went swiftly, softly along, with that power of putting aside the overwhelming consciousness of wretchedness which is possessed by those whose appointed measure of misery is the largest in this world. To die then would have been best, but not to be helpless and encounter the pity of those who could give no aid. She had the power not to think, to address herself to what

was before her, and hold back 'upon the threshold of the mind' the supreme anguish of which she could never be free, which there would be time enough, alas, and to spare, to indulge in. Perhaps, though she knew so much and was so experienced in pain, it did not occur to her at this terrible crisis of life to think it possible that any further pang might be awaiting her. The other, who waited for her within shade of the copse, drew back when he perceived that two people were coming towards him. He scarcely responded even when Mrs. Trevanion called him in a low voice by name. 'Whom have you got with you?' he said, almost in a whisper, holding himself concealed among the trees.

'Only Jane.'

'Only Jane,' he said, in a tone of relief, but still with a roughness and sullenness out of keeping with his youthful voice. He added after a moment, 'What does Jane want? I hope there is not going to be any sentimental leave-taking. I want to stay and not to go.'

'That is impossible now. Everything is altered. I am going with you, Edmund.'

'Going with me—good Lord!' There was a moment's silence; then he resumed in a tone of satire, 'What may that be for? Going with *me*! Do you think I can't take care of myself? Do you think I want a nurse at my heels?' Then another pause. 'I know what you mean. You are going away for a change, and you mean me to turn up easily and be introduced to the family? Not a bad idea at all,' he added, in a patronising tone.

'Edmund,' she said, 'afterwards, when we have time, I will tell you everything. There is no time now; but that has come about which I thought impossible. I am—free to make up to you as much as I can, for the past——'

'Free,' he repeated, with astonishment, 'to make up to me?' The pause that followed seemed one of consternation. Then he went on roughly, 'I don't know what you mean by making up to me. I have often heard that women couldn't reason. You don't mean that you are flinging over the others *now*, to make a romance—and balance matters? I don't know what you mean.'

Madam Trevanion grasped Jane's arm and leaned upon it with what seemed a sudden collapse of strength, but this was invisible to the other, who probably was unaware of any effect produced by what he said. Her voice came afterwards through the dark with a thrill in it that seemed to move the air, something more penetrating than the wind.

'I have no time to explain,' she said. 'I must husband my strength, which has been much tried. I am going with you to London to-night. We have a long walk before we reach the train. On the way, or afterwards, as my strength serves me, I will tell you—all that has happened. What I am doing,' she added, faintly, 'is by no will of mine.'

'To London to-night?' he repeated, with astonishment. 'I am not going to London to-night.'

'Yes, Edmund, with me. I want you.'

'I have wanted,' he said, 'you—or, at least, I have wanted my proper place and the people I belonged to, all my life. If you think that now, when I am a man, I am to be burdened with two women always at my heels—— Why can't you stay and make everything comfortable here? I want my rights, but I don't want you—more than is reasonable,' he added after a moment, slightly struck by his own ungraciousness. 'As for walking to the train, and going to London to-night—you, a fine lady that have always driven about in your carriage!' He gave a hoarse little laugh at the ridiculous suggestion.

Mrs. Trevanion again clutched Jane's arm. It was the only outlet for her excitement. She said very low, 'I should not have expected better—oh no; how could he know better, after all? But I must go, there is no choice. Edmund, if anything I can do now can blot out the past—no, not that—but make up for it. You, too, you have been very tyrannical to me these months past. Hush! let me speak, it is quite true. If you could have had patience, all might have been so different. Let us not upbraid each other—but if you will let me, all that I can do for you now—all that is possible——'

There was another pause. Jane, standing behind, supported her mistress in her outstretched arms, but this was not apparent, nor any other sign of weakness, except that her voice quivered upon the dark air which was still in the shadow of the corpse.

'I have told you,' he said, 'again and again, what would please me. We can't be much devoted to each other, can we, after all? We can't be a model of what's affectionate. That was all very well when I was a child, when I thought a present was just as good, or better. But now I know what is what, and that something more is wanted. Why can't you stay still where you are and send for me? You can say I'm a relation. I don't want you to sacrifice yourself—what good will that do me? I want to get the advantage of my relations, to know them all, and have my

chance. There's one thing I've set my heart upon, and you could help me in that if you liked. But to run away, good Lord! what good would that do? It's all for effect, I suppose, to make me think you are willing now to do a deal for me. You can do a deal for me if you like, but it will be by staying, not by running away.'

'Jane,' said Mrs. Trevanion, 'he does not understand me: how should he? you did not understand me at first. It is not that he means anything. And how can I tell him?—not here, I am not able. After, when we are far away, when I am out of reach, when I have got a little—strength——'

'Madam!' said Jane, 'if it is true, if you have to do it, if we must go to-night, don't stand and waste all the little strength you have got standing here.'

He listened to this conversation with impatience, yet with a growing sense that something lay beneath which would confound his hopes. He was not sympathetic with her trouble. How could he have been so? Had not her ways been contrary to his all his life? But a vague dread crept over him. He had thought himself near the object of his hopes, and now disappointment seemed to overshadow him. He looked angrily, with vexation and gathering dismay, at the dark figures of the two women, one leaning against the other. What did she mean now? How was she going to baffle him this time—she who had been contrary to him all his life?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

It was a long walk through the wind and blasts of rain, and the country roads were very dark and wet—not a night for a woman to be out in, much less a lady used to drive everywhere in her carriage, as he had said, and less still for one whose strength had been wasted by long confinement in a sick room, and whose very life was sapped by secret pain. But these things, which made it less possible for Mrs. Trevanion to bear the fatigues to which she was exposed, re-acted on the other side, and made her unconscious of the lesser outside evils which were as nothing in comparison with the real misery from which no expedient could set her free. She went along mechanically, conscious of a fatigue and aching which were almost welcome—which lulled a little the other misery which lay somewhere awaiting her, waiting for the first moment of leisure, the time when she should be clear-headed enough to understand and feel it all to the fullest. When they

came into the light at the nearest railway station the two women were alone. They got into an empty carriage and placed themselves each in a corner, and, like St. Paul, wished for day; but yet the night was welcome too, giving their proceedings an air of something strange and out of all the habits of their life which partially, momentarily, confused the every-day aspect of things around, and made this episode in existence all unnatural and unreal. It was morning, the dark grim morning of winter, without light or colour, when Mrs. Trevanion suddenly spoke for the first time. She said, as if thinking aloud, 'It was not to be expected. Why should he, when he knows so little of me?' as if reasoning with herself.

'No, Madam,' said Jane.

'If he had been like others, accustomed to these restraints—for no doubt it is a restraint——'

'Oh, yes, Madam.'

'And perhaps with time and use,' she said, sighing and faltering.

'Yes, Madam,' said Jane.

'Why do you say no and yes,' she cried, with sudden vehemence, 'as if you had no opinion of your own?'

Then Jane faltered too. 'Madam,' she said, 'everything is to be hoped from—time, as you say, and use——'

'You don't think so,' her mistress replied, with a moan, and then all settled into silence again.

It is not supposed that anything save vulgar speed and practical convenience is to be got from the railway: and yet there is nothing that affords a better refuge and shelter from the painful thoughts that attend a great catastrophe in life, and those consultations which an individual in deep trouble holds with himself, than a long silent journey at the desperate pace of an express train over the long, dark sweeps of the scarcely visible country, with the wind of rapid progress in one's face. That complete separation from all disturbance, the din that partially deadens in our ears the overwhelming commotion of brain and heart, the protection which is afforded by the roar and sweep of hot haste which holds us as in a sanctuary of darkness, peace, and solitude, is a paradox of every-day life which few think of, yet which is grateful to many. Mrs. Trevanion sank into it with a sensation which was almost ease. She lay back in her corner, as a creature wounded to death lies still after the anguish of medical care is ended, throbbing, indeed, with inevitable pain, yet with all

horror of expectation over, and nothing further asked of the sufferer. If not the anguish, at least the consciousness of anguish was deadened by the sense that here no one could demand anything from her, any response, any look, any word. She lay for a long time dumb even in thought, counting the throbs that went through her, feeling the sting and smart of every wound, yet a little eased by the absolute separation between her and everything that could ask a question or suggest a thought. It is not necessary for us in such terrible moments to think over our pangs. The sufferer lies piteously contemplating the misery that holds him, almost glad to be left alone with it. For the most terrible complications of human suffering there is no better image still than that with which the ancients portrayed the anguish of Prometheus on his rock. There he lies bound and helpless, bearing evermore the rending of the vulture's beak, sometimes writhing in his bonds, uttering hoarsely the moan of his appeal to earth and heaven; crying out sometimes the horrible cry of an endurance past enduring, anon lying silent, feeling the dew upon him, hearing soft voices of pity, comforters that tell him of peace to come, sometimes softening, sometimes only increasing his misery; but through all unending, never intermitting, the pain—'pain, ever, for ever' of that torture from which there is no escape. In all its moments of impatience, in all its succumbings, the calm of anguish which looks like resignation, the struggle with the unbearable which looks like resistance, the image is always true. We lie bound and cannot escape. We listen to what is said about us, the soft consoling of nature, the voices of the comforters. Great heavenly creatures come and sit around us, and talk together of the recovery to come; but meanwhile without a pause the heart quivers and bleeds, the cruel grief tears us without intermission. 'Ah me, alas, pain, ever, for ever!'

If ever human soul had occasion for such a consciousness it was this woman, cut off in a moment from all she loved best—from her children, from her home, from life itself and honour, and all that makes life dear. Her good name, the last possession which, shipwrecked in every other, the soul in ruin and dismay may still derive some miserable satisfaction from, had to be yielded too. A faint smile came upon her face, the profoundest expression of suffering, when this thought, like another laceration, separated itself from the crowd. A little more or less, was that not a thing to be smiled at? What could it matter? All that could be done to her was done; her spiritual tormentors had no longer

the power to give her another sensation ; she had exhausted all their tortures. Her good name, and that even in the knowledge of her children ! She smiled. Evil had done its worst. She was henceforward superior to any torture, as knowing all that pain could do.

There are some minds to which death is not a thought which is possible, or a way of escape which ever suggests itself. Hamlet, in his musings, in the sickness of his great soul, passes it indeed in review, but rejects it as an unworthy and ineffectual expedient. And it is seldom that a worthy human creature, when not at the outside verge of life, can afford to die. There is always something to do which keeps every such possibility in the background. To this thought after a time Mrs. Trevanion came round. She had a great deal to do ; she had still a duty—a responsibility—was it perhaps a possibility in life ? There existed for her still one bond—a bond partially severed for long—apparently dropped out of her existence, yet never forgotten. The brief dialogue which she had held with Jane had betrayed the condition of her thoughts in respect to this one relationship which was left to her, as it betrayed also the judgment of Jane on the subject. Both of these women knew in their hearts that the young man who was now to be the only interest of their lives had little in him which corresponded with any ideal. He had not been kind, he had not been true : he thought of nothing but himself, and yet he was all that now remained to make, to the woman upon whom his folly had brought so many and terrible losses, the possibility of a new life. When she saw the cold glimmer of the dawn, and heard the beginnings of that sound of London, which stretches so far round the centre on every side, Mrs. Trevanion awoke again to the living problem which now was to occupy her wholly. She had been guilty towards him almost all his life, and she had been punished by his means ; but perhaps it might be that there was still for her a place of repentance. She had much to do for him, and not a moment to lose. She had the power to make up to him now for all the neglect of the past. Realising what he was, unlike her in thought, in impulse, in wishes, a being who belonged to her, yet who in heart and soul was none of hers, she rose up from the terrible vigil of this endless night, to make her life henceforward the servant of his, its guardian perhaps, its guide perhaps, but in any case subject to it, as a woman at all times is subject to those for whom she lives. She spoke again, when they were near their arrival, to her maid, as

if they had continued the subject throughout the night: 'He will be sure to follow us to-morrow night, Jane.'

'I think so, Madam, for he will have nothing else to do.'

'It was natural,' said Mrs. Trevanion, 'that he should hesitate to come off in a moment. Why should he, indeed? There was nothing to break the shock to him—as there was to us—'

'To break the shock?' Jane murmured, with a look of astonishment.

'You know what I mean,' her mistress said, with a little impatience. 'When things happen like the things that have happened, one does not think very much of a midnight journey. Ah, what a small matter that is! But one who has—nothing to speak of on his mind—'

'He ought to have a great deal on his mind,' said Jane.

'Ought! Yes, I suppose I ought to be half dead, and, on the contrary, I am revived by the night journey. I am able for anything. There is no ought in such matters—it is according to your strength.'

'You have not slept a wink,' said Jane, in an injured voice.

'There are better things than sleep. And he is young, and has not learned yet the lesson that I have had such difficulty in learning.'

'What lesson is that?' said Jane, quickly. 'If it is to think of everything and everyone's business, you have been indeed a long time learning, for you have been at it all your life.'

'It takes a long time to learn,' said Madam, with a smile; 'the young do not take it in so easily. Come, Jane, we are arriving; we must think now of our new way of living.'

'Madam,' cried Jane, 'if there had been an earthquake at Highcourt, and we had both perished in it trying to save the children—'

'Jane! do you think it is wise when you are in great trouble to fix your thoughts upon the greatest happiness in the world? To have perished at Highcourt, you and me, trying—' Her face shone for a moment with a great radiance. 'You are a good woman,' she said, shaking her head with a smile, 'but why should there be a miracle to save me? It is a miracle to give me the chance of making up—for what is past.'

'Oh, Madam, I wish I knew what to say to you,' cried Jane; 'you will just try your strength and make yourself miserable, and get no return.'

Mrs. Trevanion laughed with a strange solemnity. She

looked before her into the vacant air, as if looking in the face of fate. What could make her miserable now? Nothing—the worst that could be done had been done. She said, but to herself, not to Jane, ‘There is an advantage in it, it cannot be done over again.’ Then she began to prepare for the arrival. ‘We shall have a great deal to do, and we must lose no time. Jane, you will go at once and provide some clothes for us. Whatever happens, we must have clothes, and we must have food, you know. The other things—life can go on without——’

‘Madam, for God’s sake, do not smile, it makes my blood run cold.’

‘Would you like me to cry, Jane? I might do that, too, but what the better should we be? If I were to cry all to-day and to-morrow, the moment would come when I should have to stop and smile again. And then,’ she said, turning hastily upon her faithful follower, ‘I can’t cry—I can’t cry!’ with a spasm of anguish going over her face. ‘Besides, we are just arriving,’ she added, after a moment; ‘we must not call for remark. You and I, we are two poor women setting out upon the world—upon a forlorn hope. Yes, that is it—upon a forlorn hope. We don’t look like heroes, but that is what we are going to do, without any banners flying or music, but a good heart, Jane—a good heart!’

With these words, she stepped out upon the crowded pavement at the great London station. It was a very early hour in the morning, and there were few people except the travellers and the porters about. They had no luggage, which was a thing that confused Jane, and made her ashamed to the bottom of her heart. She answered the questions of the porter with a confused consciousness of something half disgraceful in their denuded condition, and gave her bag into his hands, with a shrinking and trembling which made the poor soul, pallid with unaccustomed travelling, and out of her usual prim order, look like a furtive fugitive. She half thought the man looked at her as if she were a criminal escaping from justice. Jane was ashamed: she thought the people in the streets looked at the cab as it rattled out of the station with suspicion and surprise. She looked forward to the arrival at the hotel with a kind of horror. What would people think? Jane felt the real misery of the catastrophe more than anyone except the chief sufferer: she looked forward to the new life about to begin with dismay; but nevertheless, at this miserable moment, to come to London without luggage gave her the deepest pang of all.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MRS. TREVANION remained for some time in London, where she was joined reluctantly, after a few days, by Edmund. This young man had not been educated on the level of Highcourt. He had been sent to a cheap school. He had never known any relations, nor had any culture of the affections to refine his nature. From his school, as soon as he was old enough, he had been transferred to an office in Liverpool, where all the temptations and attractions of the great town had burst upon him without defence. Many young men have to support this ordeal, and even for those who do not come through it without scathe, it is yet possible to do so without ruinous loss and depreciation. But in that case the aberration must be but temporary, and there must be a higher ideal behind to defend the mind against that extinction of all belief in what is good which is the most horrible result of vicious living. Whether Edmund fell into the absolute depths of vice at all it is not necessary to inquire. He fell into debt, and into unlawful ways of making up for his debts. When discovery was not to be staved off any longer he had fled, not even then touched with any compunction or shame, but with a strong certainty that the matter against him would never be allowed to come to a public issue, it being so necessary to the credit of the family that his relations with Highcourt should never be made known to the world. It was with this certainty that he had come to the village near Highcourt at the beginning of Mr. Trevanion's last illness. To prevent him from bursting into her husband's presence, and bringing on one of the attacks which sapped his strength, Mrs. Trevanion had yielded to his demands on her, and as these increased daily had exposed herself to remark and scandal, and, as it proved, to ruin and shame. Did she think of that as he sat opposite to her at the table, affording reluctantly the information she insisted upon, betraying by almost every word a mind so much out of tune with hers that the bond which connected them seemed impossible? If she did think of this it was with the bitterest self-reproach, rather than any complaint of him. 'Poor boy,' she said to herself, with her heart bleeding. She had informed him of the circumstances under which she had left home, but without a word of blame or intimation that the fault was his, and received what were really his reproaches on this matter silently, with only that heart-breaking smile in her eyes, which meant indulgence unbounded, for-

givenness beforehand of anything he might do or say. When Russell, breathing hatred and hostility, came across her path, it was with the same sentiment that Madam had succoured the woman who had played so miserable a part in the catastrophe. The whole history of the event was so terrible that she could bear no comment upon it. Even Jane did not venture to speak to her of the past. She was calm, almost cheerful in what she was doing at the moment, and she had a great deal to do.

The first step she took was one which Edmund opposed with all his might, with a hundred arguments more or less valid, and a mixture of terror and temerity which it humiliated her to be a witness of. He was ready to abandon all possibility of after safety or of recovery of character, to fly as a criminal to the ends of the earth, or to keep in hiding in holes and corners, liable to be seized upon at any moment; but to take any step to atone for what he had done, to restore the money, or attempt to recover the position of a man innocent, or at least forgiven, were suggestions that filled him with passion. He declared that such an attempt would be ineffectual, that it would end by landing him in prison, that it was madness to think she could do anything. She! so entirely ignorant of business as she was. He ended indeed by denouncing her as his certain ruin, when, in spite of all these arguments, she set out for Liverpool, and left him in a paroxysm of angry terror, forgetting both respect and civility in the passion of opposition. Madam Trevanion did not shrink from this any more than from the other fits of passion to which she had been exposed in her life. She went to Liverpool alone, without even the company and support of Jane. And there she found her mission not without difficulty. But the aspect of the woman to whom fate had done its worst, who was not conscious of the insignificant pain of a rebuff from a stranger, she who had borne every anguish that could be inflicted upon a woman, had an impressive influence which in the end triumphed over everything opposed to her. She told the young man's story with a composure from which it was impossible to divine what her own share in it was, but with a pathos which touched the heart of the master, who was not a hard man, and who knew the dangers of such a youth better than she did. In the end she was permitted to pay the money, and to release the culprit from all further danger. Her success in this gave her a certain hope. As she returned her mind went forward with something like a recollection of its old elasticity, to what was at least a possibility in the future. Thus

made free, and with all the capacities of youth in him, might not some softening and melting of the young man's nature be hoped for—some development of natural affection, some enlargement of life? She said to herself that it might be so. He was not bad nor cruel—he was only unaccustomed to love and care, careless, untrained to any higher existence, unawakened to any better ideal. As she travelled back to London she said to herself that he must have repented his passion, that some compunction must have moved him, even, perhaps, some wish to atone. 'He will come to meet me,' she said to herself, with a forlorn movement of anticipation in her mind. She felt so sure as she thought of this expedient, by which he might show a wish to please her without bending his pride to confess himself in the wrong, that when she arrived and, amid the crowds at the railway, saw no one, her heart sank a little. But in a moment she recovered, saying to herself, 'Poor boy: why should he come?' He had never been used to render such attentions. He was uneasy in the new companionship, to which he was unaccustomed. Perhaps, indeed, he was ashamed, wounded, mortified, by the poor part he played in it. To owe his deliverance even to her might be humiliating to his pride. Poor boy! Thus she explained and softened everything to herself.

But Mrs. Trevanion found herself now the subject of a succession of surprises very strange to her. She was brought into intimate contact with a nature she did not understand, and had to learn the very alphabet of a language unknown to her, and study impulses which left all her experience of human nature behind, and were absolutely new. When he understood that he was free, that everything against him was wiped off, that he was in a position superior to anything he had ever dreamt of, without need to work or to deny himself, his superficial despair gave way to a burst of pleasure and self-congratulation. Even then he was on his guard not to receive with too much satisfaction the advantages of which he had in a moment become possessed, lest perhaps he should miss something more that might be coming. The unbounded delight which filled him when he found himself in London, with money in his pocket, and freedom, showed itself indeed in every look; but he still kept a wary eye upon the possibilities of the future, and would not allow that what he possessed was above his requirements or hopes. And when he perceived that the preparations for a further journey were by no means interrupted, and that Mrs. Trevanion's plan was still to go abroad, his disappointment and vexation were not to be controlled.

'What should you go abroad for?' he said. 'We're far better in London. There is everything in London that can be desired. It is the right place for a young fellow like me. I have never had any pleasure in my life, nor the means of seeing anything. And here, the moment I have something in my power, you want to rush away.'

'There is a great deal to see on the other side of the Channel, Edmund.'

'I dare say—among foreigners whose language one doesn't know a word of. And what is it, after all? Scenery, or pictures, and that sort of thing. Whereas what I want to see is life.'

She looked at him with a strange understanding of all that she would have desired to ignore, knowing what he meant by some incredible pang of inspiration, though she had neither any natural acquaintance with such a strain of thought nor any desire to divine it. 'There is life everywhere,' she said, 'and I think it will be very good for you, Edmund. You are not very strong, and there are so many things to learn.'

'I see. You think, as I am, that I am not much credit to you, Mrs. Trevanion, of Highcourt. But there might be different opinions about that.' Offence brought a flush of colour to his cheek. 'Miss Trevanion, of Highcourt, was not so difficult to please,' he added, with a laugh of vanity. 'She showed no particular objections to me; but you have ruined me there, I suppose, once for all.'

This attack left her speechless. She could not for the moment reply, but only looked at him with that appeal in her eyes, to which, in the assurance not only of his egotism, but of his total unacquaintance with what was going on in her mind, her motives and ways of thinking, he was utterly insensible. This, however, was only the first of many arguments on the subject which filled those painful days. When he saw that the preparations still went on, Edmund's disgust was great.

'I see Jane is still going on packing,' he said. 'You don't mind, then, that I can't bear it? What should you drag me away for? I am quite happy here.'

'My dear,' she said, 'you were complaining yourself that you have not anything to do. You have no friends here.'

'Nor anywhere,' said Edmund; 'and whose fault is that?'

'Perhaps it is my fault. But that does not alter the fact, Edmund. If I say that I am sorry, that is little, but still it does not mend it. In Italy everything will amuse you.'

‘Nothing will amuse me,’ said the young man. ‘I tell you I don’t care for scenery. What I want to see is life.’

‘In travelling,’ said Mrs. Trevanion, ‘you often make friends, and you see how the people of other countries live, and you learn——’

‘I don’t want to learn,’ he cried abruptly. ‘You are always harping upon that. It is too late to go to school at my age. If I have no education you must put up with it, for it is your fault. And what I want is to stay here. London is the place to learn life and everything. And if you tell me that you couldn’t get me plenty of friends, if you chose to exert yourself, I don’t believe you. It’s because you won’t, not because you can’t.’

‘Edmund!’

‘Oh, don’t contradict me, for I know better. There is one thing I want above all others, and I know you mean to go against me in that. If you stay here quiet, you know very well *they* will come to town like everybody else for the season, and then you can introduce me. She knows me already. The last time she saw me she coloured up. She knew very well what I was after. This has always been in my mind since the first time I saw her with you. She is fond of you. She will be glad enough to come, if it is even on the sly——’

He was very quick to see when he had gone wrong, and the little cry that came from her lips, the look that came over her face, warned him a moment too late. He ‘coloured up,’ as he said, crimson to the eyes, and endeavoured with an uneasy laugh to account for his slip. ‘The expression may be vulgar,’ he said, ‘but everybody uses it. And that’s about what it would come to, I suppose.’

‘You mistake me altogether, Edmund,’ she said. ‘I will not see any one on the sly, as you say; and especially not—— Don’t wound me by suggesting what is impossible. If I had not known that I had no alternative, can you suppose I should have left them at all?’

‘That’s a different matter; you were obliged to do that; but nobody could prevent you meeting them in the streets, seeing them as they pass, saying “How do you do?” introducing a relation——’

She rose up, and began to pace about the room in great agitation. ‘Don’t say any more, don’t torture me like this,’ she said. ‘Can you not understand how you are tearing me to pieces? If I were to do what you say, I should be dishonest, false both to the

living and the dead. And it would be better to be at the end of the world than to be near them in a continual fever, watching, scheming for a word. 'Oh, no! no!' she said, wringing her hands, 'do not let me be tempted beyond my strength. Edmund, for my sake, if for no other, let us go away.'

He looked at her with a sort of cynical observation, as she walked up and down the room with hurried steps at first, then calming gradually. He repeated slowly, with a half laugh, 'For your sake? But I thought everything now was to be for my sake. And it is my turn; you can't deny that.'

Mrs. Trevanion gave him a piteous look. It was true that it was his turn; and it was true that she had said all should be for him in her changed life. He had her at an advantage; a fact which to her finer nature seemed the strongest reason for generous treatment, but not to his.

'It is all very well to speak,' he continued; 'but if you really mean well by me, introduce me to Rosalind. That would be the making of me. She is a fine girl, and she has money; and she would be just as pleased——'

She stopped him, after various efforts, almost by force, seizing his arm. 'There are some things,' she said, 'that I cannot bear. This is one of them. I will not have her name brought in—not even her name——'

'Why not? What's in her name more than another? A rose, don't you know, by any other name——' he said with a forced laugh. But he was alarmed by Mrs. Trevanion's look, and the clutch which in her passion she had taken of his arm. After all, his new life was dependent upon her, and it might be expedient not to go too far.

This interlude left her trembling and full of agitation. She did not sleep all night, but moved about the room, in her dingy London lodging, scarcely able to keep still. A panic had seized hold upon her. She sent for him in the morning as soon as he had left his room, which was not early; and even he observed the havoc made in her already worn face by the night. She told him that she had resolved to start next day. 'I did not perceive,' she said, 'all the dangers of staying, till you pointed them out to me. If I am to be honest, if I am to keep any one's esteem, I must go away.'

'I don't see it,' he said somewhat sullenly. 'It's all your fancy. When a person's in hiding, he's safer in London than anywhere else.'

'I am not in hiding,' she said hastily, with a sense of mingled irritation and despair. For what words could be used which he would understand, which would convey to him any conception of what she meant? They were like two people speaking different languages, incapable of communicating to each other anything that did not lie upon the surface of their lives. When he perceived at last how much in earnest she was, how utterly resolved not to remain, he yielded, but without either grace or good humour. He had not force enough in himself to resist when it came to a distinct issue. Thus they departed together into the world unknown—two beings absolutely bound to each other, each with no one else in the world to turn to, and yet with no understanding of each other, not knowing the very alphabet of each other's thoughts.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THUS Mrs. Trevanion went away out of reach and knowledge of everything that belonged to her old life. She had not been very happy in that life. The principal actor in it, her husband, had regarded her comfort less than that of his horses or hounds. He had filled her existence with agitations, but yet had not made life unbearable until the last fatal complications had arisen. She had been surrounded by people who understood her more or less, who esteemed and approved her, and she had possessed in Rosalind the sweetest of companions, one who was in sympathy with every thought, who understood almost before she was conscious of thinking at all; a creature who was herself yet not herself, capable of sharing everything and responding at every point. And, except her husband, there was no one who regarded Madam Trevanion with anything but respect and reverence. No one mistook the elevation of her character. She was regarded with honour wherever she went, her opinions prized, her judgment much considered. When a woman to whom this position has been given suddenly descends to find herself in the sole company of one who cares nothing for her judgment, to whom all her opinions are antiquated or absurd, and herself one of those conventional female types without logic or reason, which are all that some men know of women, the confusing effect which is produced upon earth and heaven is too wonderful for words. More than any change of events, this change of position confuses and over-

whelms the mind. Sometimes it is the dismal result of an ill-considered marriage. Sometimes it appears in other relationships. She was pulled rudely down from the pedestal she had occupied so long, and rudely, suddenly, made to feel that she was no oracle, that her words had no weight because she said them, but rather carried with them a probability of foolishness because they were hers. The wonder of this bewildered at first; it confused her consciousness, and made her insecure of herself. And at last it produced the worse effect of making everything uncertain to her. Though she had been supposed so self-sustained and strong in character, she was too natural a woman not to be deeply dependent upon sympathy and the support of understanding. When these failed she tottered and found no firm footing anywhere. Perhaps she said to herself she was really foolish, as Edmund thought, unreasonable, slow to comprehend all character that was unlike her own. She was no longer young; perhaps the young were wiser, had stronger lights; perhaps her beliefs, her prejudices were things of the past. All this she came to think with wondering pain when the support of general faith and sympathy was withdrawn. It made her doubtful of everything she had done or believed, timid to speak, watching the countenance of the young man whose attitude towards her had changed all the world to her. This was not part of the great calamity that had befallen her. It was something additional, another blow; to be parted from her children, to sustain the loss of all things dear to her, was her terrible fate, a kind of vengeance for what was past; but that her self-respect, her confidence should thus be taken away from her was another distinct and severe calamity. Sometimes the result was a mental giddiness, a quiver about her of the atmosphere and all the solid surroundings, as though there was (but in a manner unthought of by Berkeley) nothing really existent but only in the thoughts of those who beheld it. Perhaps her previous experiences had led her towards this; for such had been the scope of all her husband's addresses to her for many a day. But she had not been utterly alone with him, she had felt the strong support of other people's faith and approval holding her up and giving her strength. Now all these accessories had failed her. Her world consisted of one soul, which had no faith in her; and thus, turned back upon herself, she faltered in all her moral certainties, and began to doubt whether she had ever been right, whether she had any power to judge, or perception, or even feeling, whether she were not perhaps in reality the con-

ventional woman, foolish, inconsistent, pertinacious, which she appeared through Edmund's eyes.

The other strange new sensations that Madam encountered in these years, while her little children thrived and grew under the care of Mrs. Lennox, and Rosalind developed into the full bloom of early womanhood, were many and various. She had thought herself very well acquainted with the mysteries of human endurance, but it seemed to her now that at the beginning of that new life she had known nothing of them. New depths and heights developed every day; her own complete breaking down and the withdrawal from her of confidence in herself being the great central fact of all. On Edmund's side the development too was great. He had looked and wished for pleasure and ease and self-indulgence when he had very little power of securing them. When by a change of fortune so extraordinary and unexpected he actually obtained the means of gratifying his instincts, he addressed himself to the task with a unity of purpose which was worthy of a greater aim. He was drawn aside from his end by no glimmer of ambition, no impulse to make something better out of his life. His imperfect education and ignorance of what was best in existence had perhaps something to do with this. To him as to many a labouring man the power of doing no work, nor anything but what he pleased, seemed the most supreme of gratifications. He would not give himself the trouble to study anything, even the world, confident as only the ignorant are in the power of money, and in that great evidence that he had become one of the privileged classes, the fact that he did not now need to do anything for his living. He was not absolutely bad or cruel; he only preferred his own pleasure to anybody else's, and was a little contemptuous of a woman's advice, and intolerant of her rule, and impatient of her company. Perhaps her idea that she owed herself to him, that it was paying an old debt of long-postponed duty to devote herself to him now, to do her best for him, to give him everything in her power that could make him happy, was a mistaken one from the beginning. She got to believe that she was selfish in remaining with him, while still feeling that her presence was the only possible curb upon him. How was she to find a way of serving him best, of providing for all his wants and wishes, of keeping him within the bounds of possibility, yet letting him be free from the constraint of her presence? As time went on, this problem became more and more urgent, yet by the same progress of time her mind grew less and

less clear on any point. The balance of the comparative became more difficult to carry. There was no absolute good within her reach, and she would not allow even to herself that there was any absolute bad in the young man's selfish life. It was all comparative as life was. But to find the point of comparative advantage which should be best for him, where he should be free without being abandoned, and have the power of shaping his course as he pleased without the power of ruining himself and her—this became more and more the engrossing subject of her thoughts.

As for Edmund, though he indulged in many complaints and grumbles as to having always a woman at his heels, his impatience never went the length of emancipating himself. On the whole his indolent nature found it most agreeable to have everything done for him, to have no occasion for thought. He had the power always of complaint, which gave him a kind of supremacy without responsibility. His fixed grievance was that he was kept out of London; his hope, varying as they went and came about the world, that somewhere they would meet the family from which Mrs. Trevanion had been torn, and that 'on the sly,' or otherwise (though he never repeated those unlucky words), he might find himself in a position to approach Rosalind. In the meantime he amused himself in such ways as were practicable, and spent a great deal of money, and got a certain amount of pleasure out of his life. His health was not robust, and when late hours and amusements told upon him he had the most devoted of nurses. On the whole, upon comparison with the life of a clerk on a small salary in a Liverpool office, his present existence was a sort of shabby Paradise.

About the time when Rosalind heard from Mr. Rivers of that chance encounter which revived all her longings for her mother, and at the same time all the horror of vague and miserable suspicion which surrounded Mrs. Trevanion's name, a kind of crisis had occurred in this strange wandering life. Edmund had fallen ill, more seriously than before, and in the quiet of convalescence after severe suffering had felt certain compunctions cross his mind. He had acknowledged to his tender nurse that she was very kind to him. 'If you would not nag a fellow so,' he said, 'and drive me about so that I don't know what I am doing, I think, now that I am used to your ways, we might get on.'

Mrs. Trevanion did not defend herself against the charge of 'nagging' or 'driving' as she might perhaps have done at an

earlier period, but accepted with almost grateful humility the condescension of this acknowledgment. 'In the meantime,' she said, 'you must get well, and then, please God, everything will be better.'

'If you like to make it so,' he said, already half repentant of the admission he had made. And then he added, 'If you'd only give up this fancy of yours for foreign parts. Why shouldn't we go home? You may like it, you speak the language, and so forth: but I detest it. If you want to please me and make me get well, let's go home.'

'We have no home to go to, Edmund——'

'Oh, that's nonsense, you know. You don't suppose I mean the sort of fireside business. Nothing is so easy as to get a house in London; and you know that is what I like best.'

'Edmund, how could I live in a house in London?' she said. 'You must remember that a great deal has passed that is very painful. I could not but be brought in contact with people who used to know me——'

'Ah!' he cried, 'here's the real reason at last. I thought all this time it was out of consideration for me, to keep me out of temptation, and that sort of thing; but now it crops up at last. It's for yourself after all. It is always an advance to know the true reason. And what could they do to you, those people with whom you might be brought in contact?'

She would not perhaps have said anything about herself had he not beguiled her by the momentary softness of his tone. And now one of those rapid scintillations of cross light which were continually gleaming upon her life and motives flashed over her and changed everything. To be sure! it was selfishness, no doubt, though she had not seen it so. She answered, faltering a little: 'They could do nothing to me. Perhaps you are right, Edmund. It may be that I have been thinking too much of myself. But I am sure London would not be good for you. To live there with comfort you must have something to do, or you must have—friends——'

'Well!' he said, with a kind of defiance.

'You have no friends, Edmund.'

'Well,' he repeated, 'whose fault is that? It is true that I have no friends; but I could have friends and everything else if you would take a little trouble—more than friends: I might marry and settle. You could do everything for me in that way if you would take the trouble. That's what I want to do; but I

suppose you would rather drag me for ever about with you than see me happy in a place of my own.'

Mrs. Trevanion had lost her beauty. She was pale and worn as if twenty additional years had passed over her head instead of two. But for a moment the sudden flush that warmed and lighted up her countenance restored to her something of her prime. 'I think,' she said, 'Edmund, if you will let me for a moment believe what I am saying, that, to see you happy and prosperous, I would gladly die. I know you will say my dying would be little to the purpose; but the other I cannot do for you. To marry requires a great deal that you do not think of. I don't say love, in the first place——'

'You may if you please,' he said. 'I'm awfully fond of—— Oh, I don't mind saying her name. You know who I mean. If you were good enough for her, I don't see why I shouldn't be good enough for her. You have only got to introduce me, which you can if you like, and all the rest I take in my own hands.'

'I was saying,' she repeated, 'that love, even if love exists, is not all. Before any girl of a certain position would be allowed to marry, the man must satisfy her friends. His past, and his future, and the means he has, and how he intends to live—all these things have to be taken into account. It is not so easy as you think.'

'That is all very well,' said Edmund; though he paused with a stare of mounting dismay in his beautiful eyes, larger and more liquid than ever by reason of his illness—those eyes which haunted Rosalind's imagination. 'That is all very well: but it is not as if you were a stranger: when they know who I am—when I have you to answer for me——'

A flicker of self-assertion came into her eyes. 'Why do you think they should care for me or my recommendation? You do not,' she said.

He laughed. 'That's quite different. Perhaps they know more—and I am sure they know less than I do. I should think you would like them to know about me for your own sake.'

She turned away with once more a rapid flush restoring momentary youth to her countenance. She was so changed that it seemed to her, as she caught a glimpse of herself, languidly moving across the room, in the large dim mirror opposite, that no one who belonged to her former existence would now recognise her. And there was truth in what he said. It would be better for her, for her own sake, that the family from whom she was

separated should know everything there was to tell. After the first horror lest they should know, there had come a revulsion of feeling, and she had consented in her mind that to inform them of everything would be the best, though she still shrank from it. But even if she had strength to make that supreme effort it could do her no good. Nothing, they had said, no explanation, no clearing up, would ever remove the ban under which she lay. And it would be better to go down to her grave unjustified than to place Rosalind in danger. She looked back upon the convalescent as he resumed fretfully the book which was for the moment his only way of amusing himself. Illness had cleared away from Edmund's face all the traces of self-indulgence which she had seen there. It was a beautiful face, full of apparent meaning and sentiment, the eyes full of tenderness and passion—or at least what might seem so in other lights, and to spectators less dismally enlightened than herself. A young soul like Rosalind, full of faith and enthusiasm, might take that face for the face of a hero, a poet. Ah! this was a cruel thought that came to her against her will, that stabbed her like a knife as it came. She said to herself tremulously that in other circumstances, with other people, he might have been, might even be, all that his face told. Only with her from the beginning everything had gone wrong—which again, in some subtle way, according to those revenges which everything that is evil brings with it, was her fault and not his. But Rosalind must not be led to put her faith upon promises which were all unfulfilled. Rosalind must not run any such risk. Whatever should happen, she could not expose to so great a danger another woman, and that her own child.

But there were other means of setting the wheels of fate in motion, with which Madame Trevanion had nothing to do.

(To be continued.)

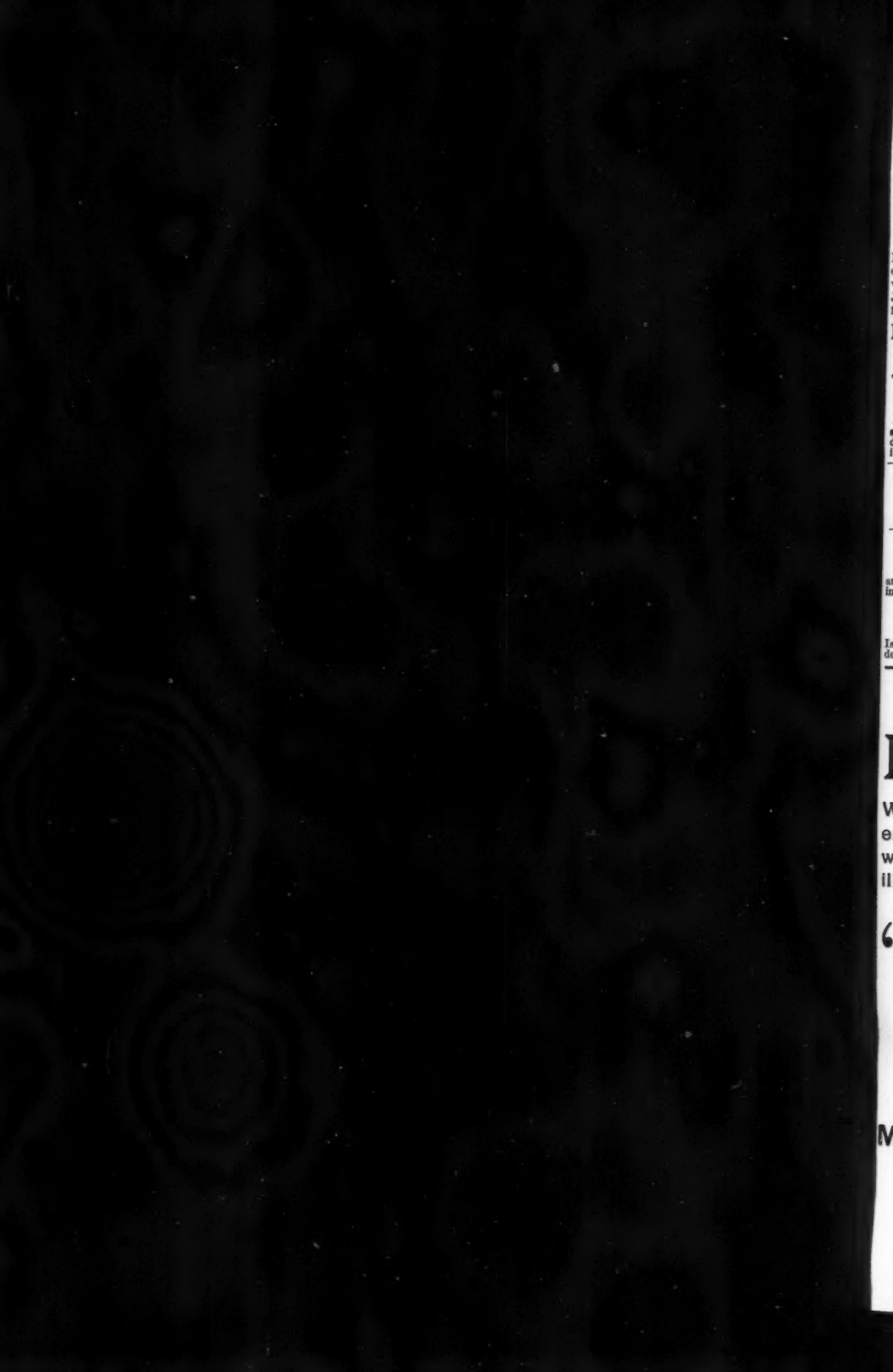
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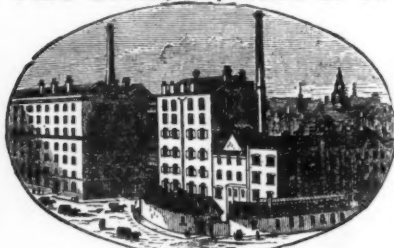
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